TYROL

PAINTED BY
E. HARRISON COMPTON

DESCRIBED BY
W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN

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TYROL

INNSBRUCK.

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PAINTED BY

E. HARRISON COMPTON

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W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN

WITH
24 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1908

PREFACE

In the following pages I have attempted to do for the reader with the pen what Mr. Harrison Compton has so ably accomplished with the brush—that is, to bring a bird's-eye view of Tyrol and its charms before him. He will have to do without "first impressions," and there is about it none of the freshness of the newcomer's *aperçu* of a country; for as I am an old resident in the country, and a generation has passed since, in the callow years of youth, I published my first essay, *Tyrol and the Tyrolese*, it will be soon my turn to pen "last impressions." *Gaddings with a Primitive People* and *Sport in the Alps* filled in the interval, the one giving an account of the habits and customs of the Tyrolese, the other describing chamois and stag shooting in the Austrian mountains. A fourth book on the country, *The Land in the Mountains*, was launched less

than a year ago; it had for its subject the often romantic and historically always interesting stories of Tyrol's castles, and their lusty feudal lords, whose principal occupation was war, whose favourite recreation was the chase, and whose rude pleasure was deep wassail. The number of these mediæval *Schlösser* is astonishingly great for such a small country, and the tale of their rise and fall was a tempting field for research. In the present pages I have been able to touch this attractive subject only on the surface.

THE AUTHOR.

SCHLOSS MATZEN, TYROL,
March, 1908.

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The celebrated Eagle Map of Tyrol, facing page 1.

THE CELEBRATED "EAGLE" MAP OF TYROL

Designed by Tyrol's most ancient cartographer, Burghlechner, A.D. 1603

TYROL

CHAPTER I

THE LOWER INN VALLEY

When ingenious Burglechner, Tyrol's famous chronicler and cartographer, designed in the year 1603 one of the oldest existing maps of the country, he embellished it by a bit of symbolic gasconade which it would have been just as well to have omitted. As the appended much-reduced reproduction of this map shows, he represents Tyrol as shaped like an eagle with extended wings, a widespread tail, and outstretched claws. One of the talons clutches in its grip the squirming form of the Lion of Venice, the other the writhing Ibex of the Grisons. Now, as history will not let us forget, the Lion as well as the Ibex had, when last matched against the King of Birds, shown themselves well able to take care of themselves, and Sigismund of Tyrol, no less than his great imperial nephew, Maximilian, had every reason to regret having roused them.

In other respects the resemblance of Tyrol's shape to the great bird of the mountains remains as of old.

Its heraldic colour, crimson, to denote its fighting qualities which steeped it often in the blood of its foes, makes the armorial emblem of Tyrol a prominent one in that long chain of provincial coats-of-arms that form the Imperial escutcheon of the Habsburg realm.

Keeping this outline of the country before us, the railway traveller can enter its valleys by both the tips of its outspread wings—viz., he can come in from the east by way of Kufstein on the Munich-Innsbruck line, and from the west by way of the Arlberg and Basle railway. He can reach the capital, the heart of the bird, by each of its extended claws—viz., from the south-east by the Pusterthal railway, which skirts the northern slopes of the Dolomite region, or from the south-west by way of the newly-constructed Vintschgau line, which, however, still lacks the connecting-link towards the Engadine. And, lastly, the traveller who has first visited Italy can enter Tyrol by way of Verona from the south, where the tail of the mountain-bird represents the Italian-speaking district of which its inhabitants, as an expression of their political sympathies with the Italian kingdom across the border, love to speak as the Trentino, a name which is anathema to the German-speaking Tyrolese, who, of course, form the majority. For Tyrol would not be a province of the Dual Empire if it had not its own little family quarrel as its particular contribution to the internal as well as external dissensions which are such a marked feature of the political life of Austria-Hungary.

KUFSTEIN

Beginning with the first-named route, which is the cheapest of all approaches from London to Innsbruck, viz., via Flushing or Rotterdam, though the difference in its favour is only a few shillings, the old fortress of Kufstein, which marks the Austro-Bavarian boundary, brings the traveller at once face to face with a bit of old Tyrolese history. For here that enthusiastic sportsman, Emperor Maximilian I., burnt powder with good effect four centuries ago (1504). A desultory war having broken out between him and the Duke of Bavaria, in spite of one of this dynasty having married his sister, the doughty Max, underrating at first the strength of Kufstein's walls, commenced the siege with inefficient "culverines" and "serpents," whose stone balls made such little impression on the stronghold's bastions that the commander, the dare-devil knight Pinzenau, caused the spots where the missiles had struck to be brushed with brooms, which piece of wit so infuriated the short-tempered Max that he swore he would "shave without a razor" every mother's son of the garrison. Forthwith the two largest pieces of artillery then existing, the huge *Weckauf* and *Burlebaus*,* which were lying in the arsenal at Innsbruck fresh from the foundry, were ordered to the front. Placed on rafts, they were floated down the Inn River, but so low was the water, and so enormously heavy

* These monsters were soon found to be so unwieldy that they were melted down in 1537 by Löffler, the celebrated founder, who cast many of the figures round Maximilian's cenotaph at Innsbruck, and it is believed that the gun-metal was used for this purpose.

were these monsters, that, though the order was given on September 24, they reached the end of their short forty-five-mile journey only on October 12. When finally they were mounted in position—it took thirty-two horses to move one—their great iron projectiles, weighing 300 pounds, made short work of the fourteen-feet thick walls.

Poor Pinzenau, when he saw that resistance was useless, wanted to surrender, and sent two young nobles as *parlementaires* into the Emperor's camp, which was situated on some rising ground close enough to the doomed castle, according to our modern ideas, to have picked off every man with a Lee-Metford or Mannlicher. But the angry Emperor would have none of it, and sent the two nobles back with the message that, as it had pleased the knight to make a sieve of a fine castle, it would please his Majesty that he, the man responsible for it, should share the castle's fate. A few hours more of *Burlebaus'* and *Weckauf's* activity made it clear to the doomed men that resistance was useless, and that they might as well fall face to face with the enemy as to be buried under the tumbling walls. But Max was expecting such a sortie, and as the men emerged in the early dawn from the secret passage at the base of the rock they were taken prisoners, and forthwith hurried before a council of war, near which the "barber" was already waiting. Seventeen heads besides Pinzenau's, who was the first victim, were already "shaved" on the headsman's block, when Duke Erich of Brunswick, a great crony

of the Emperor, whose life he had a short time previously saved in battle, stepped forward, and on bended knee pleaded for the lives of the rest of the garrison.

Maximilian had publicly announced that he would so soundly box the ears of any meddler who should dare ask for mercy that he would remember it his lifetime, for the smoking heap of ruins, all that was left of the fine castle of Kufstein, had turned the Emperor's otherwise magnanimous heart to stone. Maximilian, touched by the Duke's impassionate appeal, struck him, so as to keep his word, a gentle blow on the cheek with his glove, and called a halt to the executioner's axe.

Kufstein's early history is shrouded; later on it became what one might call "mixed." In Roman times the station *Albianum* on the great road to *Noricum*, lay somewhere in this neighbourhood. That is certain, and the probability is that it occupied the top of the rock where now stands the medieval castle which Emperor Maximilian shelled. Certain historians in the at present fashionable hypercritical spirit of modern research throw some doubt upon the above, for in the Augustine Itinerary the distances between stations do not quite chime in. But common sense, of which the Roman legionary who founded *Albianum* would have been entirely devoid had he built it elsewhere, points to it unmistakably. No emissary of Drusus and Tiberius, those clever stepsons of Augustus, could have committed such a strategic mistake. And as there are other good reasons—the discovery of Roman remains, etc.—to speak for it, it is fairly safe to assume the

correctness of the majority of historians. Before the invention of gunpowder the rock of Kufstein must have been as invincible as was Gibraltar, for in those days the approaches to the top of the rock had not been rendered easy as they were later on.

In Charlemagne's days Kufstein was already in the hands of the clerics, for one of the few documents of that reign that has come down to us is the *Indiculus Arnonis*, in which "the *cellula* with a church at Caofstein" is enumerated as among the Arch-See of Salzburg's possessions. Later on its history becomes as chequered as it was bloodstained, for in the incessant wars between the rulers of Tyrol and the Dukes of Bavaria it became the playball of warriors as well as of politicians. Now besieged and taken by assault or battered down, then by stealthy surprise; now mortgaged to secular or ecclesiastic lord, then redeemed to be presently exchanged for other possessions; now handed over as part of the ducal dower to a Princess of a foreign house, only to revert to the dynasts of Tyrol by force of arms, or by treaty after the lapse of many years.

Kufstein, as we see it to-day, is a cheerful and go-ahead little town, the grim old castle, round the base of which the town is built, the only relic of its tempestuous past. To-day the castle, notwithstanding its commanding position, its extensive buildings with walls of immense thickness, and the superb view obtainable from it, stands empty and deserted, an old sergeant keeping watch over the dismantled stronghold. It is Government property, having served as a

regular fortress and as a state prison up to within a quarter of a century or so. Immediately to the east of the town the slopes of the *Kaiser Gebirg* or *Wilde Kaiser* (Wild Emperor) begin to rise. This is a picturesque clump of limestone mountains of bold shape, not unlike the Dolomites on a small scale. Bare of vegetation in their upper stretches, and running in some cases to needle-shaped aiguilles and serrated ridges, of which, however, we see nothing from the town itself, for wooded hills intervene on this side, they form one of the most popular practising-grounds for the thousands of mountaineers who dwell in the cities on the vast central plains of Germany. For the *Kaiser Gebirg* is the first real mountain chain affording rock-climbs reached by the hosts rushing southward on their annual invasion of the Austrian mountains. It is particularly popular among the Munichers, who can reach the foot of these mountains in two hours. Some, indeed, of these jaggy rock towers afford such good chances for inexperienced rock-climbers to reach what seems to be the goal of many of these foolish people —*i.e.*, a sudden death—that quite a dozen accidents occur annually in the *Kaiser Gebirg;* and there was some talk of the Government prohibiting guideless climbing there. One peak, the *Todtenkirchl* (Death's Chapel), being the most notorious among them, has I do not know how many hopeful young lives on its conscience.

When I first knew them they were unknown wilds, and formed a fine chamois preserve of Archduke

Ludwig Victor, brother of the Emperor. But with the growth of the mountain-climbing craze they quickly became known to mountaineers, and so fast did their fame spread that it was soon found impossible to keep up the preserve, for chamois shun noise and the presence of human beings as they would poison. As I sadly scan the trophies on my walls which I garnered there in past days, I see in the fate of the *Kaiser Gebirg* the beginning of the end: what has taken place there will be repeated, and, in fact, is already being repeated in dozens of other choice mountain sporting-grounds. Hunting has to go to the wall also in Tyrol; *Pro bono publico*, I suppose those will exclaim who deem that the good of the greater number should outweigh all other claims. Poor little ousted chamois! Nature, by the *Todten-kirchl* tragedies, sees that your sad fate shall not be left unavenged! The human toll their former home levies is a retribution that tells its own pathetic tale.

From Kufstein the railway follows up the Inn till it leaves it at Landeck, near the foot of the Arlberg. The valley from Kufstein to Innsbruck, which capital is about half-way between Kufstein and Landeck, is called the Unter Innthal, or lower valley, while the continuation from the capital to Landeck, is known as the Ober Innthal, or upper valley. The Inn River, it is as well to mention here, has to put up with many names to distinguish its various parts in the course of that more than 300 miles' long journey from the *Lago*

di Lunghino, in the furthermost end of the Upper Engadine, to the far-away Bavarian town of Passau, where it joins the Danube. The latter's volume of water is at that point rather smaller than that of the Inn, so that, to be just, the Inn should really be considered as the headwater of the Danube. Why this geographical mistake was made by our forefathers, it is bootless to ponder.

From Kufstein to Innsbruck, the Unter Innthal presents itself as a sunny, hill-skirted, broad-bottomed, fertile valley. Into it open several larger lateral valleys and many smaller ones. The first important one joins the main one at Wörgl, the railway junction where the line to Vienna branches off, so that travellers visiting Kitzbühel, in the north-eastern corner of Tyrol, must leave the train here. Kitzbühel, to which reference may be made before we proceed further up the Lower Inn Valley, is an ancient little town lying in a prettily wooded cup in the mountains. After centuries of retirement in a somewhat out-of-the-way corner of Eagle Land, it has now blossomed forth not only as an attractive summer resort, but as a capital centre for winter sports, more in particular for ski-running. According to one well-known authority on that enticing sport, the neighbourhood of Kitzbühel is the best ski-ground in Europe, an opinion I have heard repeated by others who have visited it. Two chateaux overlook the town, both belonging to Count Lamberg. In the one he lives himself; the other, close to the Schwarz See, is rented by a Mr. and Mrs.

Pass, who have started an English *pension*. A first-class modern hotel has also been recently built.

Not far from Kitzbühel stands a little wayside chapel, remarkable because it is annually the scene of a quaint pilgrimage to commemorate the victory achieved here by an inferior force of mounted peasantry over an enemy about whose identity historians are not quite agreed, but it was probably a Swedish army or an allied force contending in the Thirty Years War. The inscription in the chapel runs: "Bis hier her und nicht weiter Kamen die Schwedischen Reiter" (Till here, and no further, came the Swedish horsemen). The pilgrimage, which is still kept up, takes place on the day of Corpus Christi, when the peasants from the neighbourhood, dressed in their quaint old costumes, mounted on their farm-horses, headed by several priests, also mounted, repair in procession to this chapel, where a Mass is read. Only those who have witnessed this strange pageant can realize the inexpressibly quaint effect cut by many of the devout riders as the long file of horsemen, clad in long frock-coats with waists right up their shoulders, huge furry-looking beaver hats on their heads, wends its way through the fields. Occasionally strong language, called forth by unruly steeds, intermingles with the chants or the telling of the beads. The background to this quaint picture is formed by a serrated chain of bare limestone peaks and dark forests. It is the *Kaiser Gebirg* seen from the south, for we have quartered the compass in keeping to the circuitous

KITZBÜHEL

railway track. From Kitzbühel their resemblance to a tamer sort of Dolomites is more striking than from Kufstein, and two or three formidable rock-towers stand out, if we examine the range a little closer.

On one of them occurred to me many years ago a little adventure which gave me an opportunity of admiring the grand view rather longer than was pleasant. I was out stalking chamois, and, having some unoccupied hours in the middle of the day, when stalking is practically useless, as the beasts are resting, I thought I would ascend one of the pinnacles upon which at that time few human beings, I suppose, had ever set foot. The very last bit was a smooth-faced rock not more than 10 or 12 feet high, but absolutely unclimbable if unaided by rope or another man upon whose shoulders one could get, and so obtain a handgrip of the top, and thus draw oneself up. As I was alone, I had recourse to a short length of rope I had in my *Rücksack*. Making a slip noose, I threw it upwards till it gripped some projection, and then drew myself up. While smoking my pipe and looking about me, an unfortunate movement of my legs, which were dangling over the brink as I sat, caused the rope to slip and to fall down to the small ledge on which I had stood when flinging it upwards. This ledge or band of rock was uncomfortably narrow, not wider than 20 or 30 inches, and the abyss below was a perpendicular wall four or five church-steeples in depth.

At first it did not seem such a serious fix to be in. By letting myself drop to the ledge, my extended arms

gripping the top, the distance between the soles of my feet and the ledge was not more than 4 feet or so. Nothing to speak of, if that yawning gulf had not been there and I had had boots on my feet. But, having taken these off and left them below, together with my coat and rifle (previous parts in the ascent had been fairly stiff), I should have to drop on to sharp rocks barefooted, and hence would be very apt to lose my balance. The more I considered the position, the more I funked that drop, and, to make a long story short, I stayed on that pinnacle two nights, until the morning of the third day, before hunger drove me to risk the drop, which I did in safety. How I got down the remainder of that descent, shinning down chimneys and creeping along narrow ledges, was a mystery to me afterwards, for I was faint with hunger, and my knees trembled and shook under me. On reaching the first habitation where I happened to be known, the peasant woman at the door hardly recognized me.

But we must get back to modern days and to things more interesting to the reader. Were we to follow the railway beyond Kitzbühel, we should soon reach the Salzburg frontier, the pretty mountain-lake of Zell am See, visited by thousands in summer, being one of the first larger places we would get to. But as we have to remain true to Eagle Land, we must retrace our steps along the railway-track to Wörgl, where we again rejoin the broad and sunny main valley. After passing Kundl, where there is a two-century-old brewery, one of the oldest in this part of the world, we see on the left-

hand side, at a distance of less than a mile from the train, a lonely little church of Gothic architecture with the usual needle-shaped spire. Unlike other churches, which are generally the centre of a village, the peasants' cottages clustering round the house of God as warriors would round a hard-pressed standard-bearer, the little church of St. Leonhardt stands aloof of human habitations other than what was once the priest's dwelling. Its foundation takes us back to the earliest Christian days in this part of the Inn Valley, for it marks the spot where Emperor Henry II., as he was riding past on his journey to Italy 900 years ago, met with an accident to which legend-mongers speedily attached an inner meaning. While on his first expedition to Rome, A.D. 1004, he is said to have passed at this spot the carved figure of a saint which some peasants had fished out of the Inn River. As the pious Emperor passed the statue, which was lying there neglected and unshrined, he made a vow that, if his expedition were successful, he would build there a church for the fit housing of the saintly effigy. Eight years later, on passing the same spot *en route* to have himself crowned in Italy, his horse refused to proceed, showed fright, and in the end threw the uncrowned King of the Romans. Then only did it flash upon him that he had forgotten all about his vow. His expedition had been crowned with success, but the saint's effigy was still lying there unprovided with a sheltering roof. Forthwith the church was commenced, and, though restored to its present shape in the fifteenth century, there

remain many traces that confirm its early Romanesque origin. Legend as it is, there is no reason why the main facts should not be true ; the dates are corroborated by history, and marble carvings of a given style are among the most durable proofs. That no church could have been built there at that early date, except for some such exceptional reason, is a matter of certainty. Indisputable, likewise, is the circumstance that the highroad at the side of which the shrine stands was the approach through the Unter Innthal to the oldest and lowest of all passes over the Alps—*i.e.*, the Brenner. It was even in those early days the favourite highway to Italy. Over the Brenner, historians have shown, no fewer than forty-six expeditions of German Emperors passed in the three centuries between A.D. 951 and A.D. 1251. The difficulties that these vast armies had to surmount, marching over wild, uninhabited Alpine heights, particularly if the traverse was attempted in winter, as was the case often enough, were of the most formidable character. They were so great that several Emperors succumbed to the hardships. What such expeditions, consisting of disorderly masses held together by the loosest of discipline, meant to the unfortunate country through which they passed, we can hardly realize nowadays. Slowly eating and pillaging its way, the terrorized inhabitants, rather than see their women outraged and their cattle driven away, fled from their dwellings into inaccessible retreats in the mountains, leaving the homesteads to the tender mercies of the unruly hosts.

Constructed originally by the Romans, the great Alpine road, after the fall of that empire and the reign of chaos which existed for the following three or four centuries, fell into a wretched state of repair, and it was only when the strong hand of Charlemagne knitted together his vast possessions that attention was again paid to the ancient highway. For the following thousand years it flourished as did no other European highroad, for it formed the principal channel for trade between Italy, the land of culture and wealth, the "jumping off" place to the rich East for all travel from the vast plains of Germany and the Netherland, north of the great mountain barrier. Over the Brenner marched not only militant hosts out of number and the emissaries of trade and manufacture, but also an army of art disciples wandering southwards to seek tuition at the Italian seats of learning in the towns and at art-loving Courts. It was an army of which the members, unlike so many military adventurers who left their bleaching bones on Italian fields, did not fail to return to their native hearths. And it was this returning tide of skilled craftsmen and enthusiastic artists that did so much to make Tyrol the most artistic country of its size. For, as travel was slow, and it was customary to halt in the principal towns on the way, it came to pass that Tyrolese towns on the Brenner route soon became famous beyond others for their silversmiths, armourers, metal-workers, painters, sculptors, glass-factories, etc., as famous as were some of the castles commanding the highroad. In these *Schlösser* treasures of all sorts were garnered

by men who did not fail to take advantage of the country's unique geographical position, which permitted them to take toll—in some instances, perhaps, in a manner not consonant with the laws of the land—in connexion with one of the most continuous trade and art movements known to history.

I have taken occasion to notice all this rather in advance of the place where otherwise I would have mentioned it, namely, when the Brenner itself comes to be described, for the reason that, after leaving behind us the forlorn little shrine of St. Leonhardt, the very next stopping-place of the train * is the old town of Rattenberg, which illustrates one phase of the story I have had to tell. I said that the great Brenner highroad enjoyed for a thousand years a traffic no other pass could touch. These thousand years came to a sudden end less than half a century ago, when the railway by which we are travelling came to be constructed. Along this great highroad had sprung up in the course of centuries numerous old towns and villages that had fattened and waxed wealthy upon its traffic. The great trade between Italy and the North employed thousands upon thousands of waggons, carts, and scores of pack-trains, and all these had nightly to find shelter and house-room, so that the road became lined with commodious inns with very extensive stable-room. But trade, from the moment that through traffic by rail became possible, unfortunately took to

* Our train is not an express, for only the ordinary exceedingly slow passenger trains stop at these smaller stations.

ZEMMTHAL, ZILLERTHAL.

the cheaper and infinitely faster means of forwarding goods. Blue ruin stared in the face of these old-fashioned hostelries. By a sudden and, to the slow-thinking people, unexpected blow, all road traffic stopped, and with it the means of livelihood for thousands. In some of these old roadside towns which lay on the banks of the River Inn—Rattenberg, Schwaz, and Hall being, perhaps, the three best examples—not only all traffic by road, but also all river traffic ceased, the latter being also an important item, for Tyrol's chief exports, salt, wood, and ores, were sent by water down the Inn to the Danube, and thence to Vienna and beyond.

Rattenberg consists mainly of one street, for the space occupied by the town is but a narrow strip of land between a steeply-rising mountain and the rapidly-flowing Inn River. In this street almost every house was an inn, with stables at the back. Many of them still have over their arched marble doorways, overhanging the street, the curious signs of skilfully hand-wrought iron, showing the trading token, such as a bunch of grapes, an eagle, a white or black horse, a great freight waggon with its six horses, a lion or ibex, generally "rampant," or a crown, if the house had been named after some royal personage. For more than forty years, from the moment that the locomotive whistle first woke the echoes in the Unter Innthal, these houses had stood empty and falling into decay, for the owners had either been ruined or were hovering on the brink of financial disaster. Quite of

late years a turn of the tide in their favour has occurred, for a new traffic has sprung up—*i.e.*, that of the *Sommerfrischler*, as are called the summer visitors who, for reasons of economy, fight shy of the larger watering-places. They are officials, professors or merchants from large towns who take their annual holiday, not by travelling about, but by coming straight to some of these old-fashioned Tyrolese towns, renting rooms either in inns or in private houses, and spending their six or eight weeks' *Sommerfrische* by making short excursions in the immediate surroundings of the village which they have selected as headquarters. It is a quiet, wholesome, and eminently economic way of passing one's holidays; and though these townfolk evince an extraordinary fondness for wandering about on highroads or on paths which lead to a *Gasthaus*, or beer-garden, they are generally a very harmless lot of people, who are quite satisfied with the primitive quarters and plain food, than which they could not reasonably expect much more for their money. In these village and roadside inns smiling *Kellnerinen*, wearing often a carnation or a geranium in their hair, and dressed in sprightly national costume, have not yet been replaced by that abomination of more pretentious establishments, the waiter in greasy swallow-tails. The hostess, usually a buxom, motherly person with a friendly smile, and the stalwart pipe-smoking host, give their guests a homely welcome and a hearty shake of the hand, as if they were old friends, free from the sycophantic smirk that awaits one in the up-to-date

hotel. In such hostelries the charges are kept on the old level, and for a shilling a night you get the pick of the rooms, while for boarders sixpence or ninepence is the usual charge per bed.

A word descriptive of the old-fashioned country inn in the German-speaking parts of Tyrol may not be out of place here, so as to differentiate it from the more modern and also far more pretentious "hotel." It is, as a rule, a solid, substantial-looking two or three storied building with wide-spreading eaves. One enters it through an arched doorway, often of carved marble, and in the older type of houses one finds oneself in a vaulted entrance-hall with a stone floor. From this hall opens out the kitchen, store-rooms, cellars, and the *Schankstube*, or bar-room, frequented by peasants and the commoner sort of guests, while the *Herrenstube*, or room for gentle-folk, is situated either opposite the former, or it is on the first-floor. On ascending the stone stairs to the latter, a wide hall, reaching from the front to the back of the house, with doors leading to the bedrooms, is reached. Nowadays, when even the most out-of-the-way *Gasthaus* proprietor lays himself out for the regular visits of *Sommerfrischler*, who dwell with him for weeks, and hence has turned one of the larger bedrooms into an additional dining-room, or has built on a covered-in veranda for his guests to sit in, the former use of the broad, airy landing-hall as a dining-room has more or less ceased, except when the house is so crowded that this wide space must be made use of. But in old days the "quality"

—*i.e.*, the guests who came in their own carriages, as so many English people did, posting through the country—usually turned this space into a dining-room, thus escaping the smoky atmosphere of the *Herrenstube.* With this exception, many of these substantial old hostelries are just the same as they were forty or fifty years ago, for in Tyrol things do not change rapidly. If one stays in one of these inns for a day or two, the ever-smiling *Kellnerin* or the daughter of the house presents one on parting with a nosegay, as a sign of good-will, and the bill will be written out on a school-child's slate, if, indeed, it has not been chalked down on a corner of the speckless dining-table, after drawing the cloth aside, or on the back of the door.

Gilbert and Churchill, in their delightful book on Tyrol, expressed fifty years ago the fear that "the Tyrolese country inn, in its charming and kindly simplicity, will probably not long survive. It is already disappearing on the principal routes, where English tourists indulge in the 'bounce' peculiar to their nation, and shout '*Garçon !*' to the modest, self-respecting *Kellnerin.*" Fortunately, these fears have not been realized to the full extent, which they undoubtedly would have done but for Tyrolese conservatism; and visitors who know where to go can still find these roomy, clean old inns that "are as comfortable as need be, beautifully kept, and without any of that frowzy look so common in an English inn," as the above authors put it.

In such *Gasthäuser*, after the evening meal has been

cleared away, and the buxom *Frau Wirthin's* inquiries how her fare has *geschmeckt* have been satisfactorily answered, she will sit down at one's side with a smiling "*Ist's erlaubt?*" and forthwith proceed to satisfy her curiosity as to one's nationality, etc. In out-of-the-way places it is the Americans more than the English which arouse the native's curiosity. Two or three years ago I happened to pass the night at such an old-fashioned posting inn with some young Americans, on the way to a shoot we had taken. The rotund and smiling *Frau Postmeisterin*, when she came for her evening chat, on being informed that some of us hailed from New York, was intensely interested. She had never seen an American before, she told us—"Leastaway, not a live one," she added. When asked where she had seen a dead one, she informed us that once she had seen "einen gewissen Herrn Lincoln" (a certain Herr Lincoln) in a travelling wax-show. The American's delighted chuckles puzzled the old lady a trifle, but the reader can imagine our amusement when she presently turned to me, and asked me quite loud what those noble-looking *Herren*, sitting at a table in a corner of the room, and who had come with us, had done that they weren't asked to sit at our table? The two unfortunate individuals, who understood German, were the very superior English valets of the New Yorkers, who, as there was no other room for them to sit in, had to use the one we were in!

And now back to the picturesque old town of Rattenberg, with its two rows of old inns facing each

other in the straggling street, its quaint old town-gate, and the many different styles of oriel-like bow-windows bulging out into the street. They are all features which are favourite subjects for painters, half a dozen being seen often at one time in different parts of it. Near Rattenberg two lateral valleys come in. The one on the north side is the Brandenberg, the other on the south the Alpbach, while a third, that has, so to speak, no exit, is the yet remoter glen of the Wildschönau. All three can be reached from here. These valleys, to which only rough cart-tracks or narrow paths give access, are inhabited by typical Unter Innthal peasant communities, dispersed in straggling settlements or isolated dwellings. These people are still unspoilt, and live in the patriarchal old style of their forbears, their farms and flocks providing them with all the raw material they require ; while their own hands or those of their fellow-villagers turn the wool into frieze, or *Loden*, the flax and hemp into linen, the cow-hides into boots and harness, the trees in their forests into tables and chairs, the grain into flour, the milk into butter, and, of late, the water-power of the nearest torrent into electric light. Except, perhaps, tobacco, a little coffee and sugar, the two latter being luxuries indulged in on fête-days only, these valleys are self-sustaining.

CHAPTER II

THE TYROLESE PEASANT

Let me say here a few words about the Tyrolese peasant of the German-speaking parts of the country. I mean the genuine article, not the inhabitant of larger villages or towns tainted by civilization. A long residence in his country has made me, I confess, partial to this manly, simple-minded, and kindly-hearted Nature's gentleman, who is also very often a sterling sportsman by instinct. This you will find out if you pit yourself against him in any bodily exercise known to him, or if you will watch him when he is pursuing game, or when you become acquainted with his uniform gentleness towards women, children, and animals. When his passions are aroused, and the primal fighting instincts of man come to the fore, he is a child of Nature; he fights with a sturdy defiance which is instilled into him by his lusty strength, and the brutalities he may commit in such moments are but the spontaneous outburst of man's natural instincts, without which our primitive forefathers would not have con-

quered the world. The hardships of his daily life have steeled his fibre, and his courage as well as his fearlessness of pain is extraordinary, as the following couple of instances may go to prove.

Not long ago a young peasant of the Zillerthal, by profession a woodcutter, had his leg crushed to pulp by a falling tree. His single companion rushed down the mountain-side to fetch the distant doctor. When the latter arrived, after many hours, he found that the injured man had cut off the crushed part by severing the ligaments with his pocket-knife, and, tying his braces tightly round to stop the hæmorrhage, had actually hobbled some distance down the path to meet him, though by that time night had fallen. The doctor saw that it would be necessary to amputate what remained of the stump higher up, and he did it there and then, the man lying on the ground propped against a tree, and holding during the operation the lantern, the other man having gone off to fetch some men with a litter.

Another hero of the same stamp was a keeper on a friend's chamois preserve in the same valley. Attempting to arrest two poachers, he was shot by one of them *à bout portant* in the stomach. Thinking he was dead, the two poachers ran off. Recovering consciousness soon afterwards, he managed, though in the most desperate pain, to drag himself down to the nearest alp-hut, which it took him five hours to reach, holding his intestines in his hands all the time ; for the wound gaped wide, as the broad buckle of his belt had been

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hit by the shot and forced into his body. There, before dying, he told the names of the men to the affrighted girl. In the end the two wretches got off with a few weeks' imprisonment, for they claimed that the gun had gone off accidently.

Within five years no fewer than four lives have been thus lost in poaching affrays in this one preserve, and a fifth man is lying at death's door in hospital as I am writing this; and yet, in spite of such feebly administered law for the keepers' protection, there is no dearth of applicants when such a post falls vacant, though the wage is only £35 per annum. I doubt if in any other country one would have such a fine lot of young fellows, the pick of manhood, to choose from under the same circumstances.

But let us get back to our peasant, the most unconventional "sportsman" imaginable, according to our modern interpretation of that word. A racing bet he has not made in his whole life, for the good reason that he does not know what a racehorse is. About football, cricket, and other "sports" he is even more crassly ignorant, for he knows nothing whatever of such things. The villagers' pastime of skittles in summer and curling in winter is not for him in his isolated homestead high up on the mountains. The game played by him, his wife and children, from their tenderest years upwards, six days out of seven is a hard one beyond description. The soil is poor, the little patch of arable land is situated on a slope steep as a church-roof, and the necessary manure has to be carried up in

baskets, mostly on women's shoulders, for the men are away doing yet harder jobs; the climate is rough, hardly a month without frost, and seven months of deep snow, which in some years falls to an incredible depth — last winter, according to official sources, 21 feet of snow fell in the valley of Brandenberg, and the houses were buried up to the first-floor windows. Sparse crops of rye and oats are all he can raise beyond his dairy produce wherewith to feed himself and his offspring. Of the latter God has been most prolific.

In the summer he and his commence their back-breaking daily toil when the sun rises, and it finishes when dusk sets in, so that his "day" is double and more of the eight hours made fashionable with us by the L.C.C. and like employers of labour at other people's expense, controlled by labour unions. Turn these two last words round—union of labour—and you get at the true inner reason of the happy lot of my peasant. For distinctly happy, notwithstanding the sheer endless drudgery, I call it, and the longer one looks round in the world the more so it appears. However frugal and monotonous his fare, primitive his habitation and dress, lonely and sequestered from human intercourse his existence, yet—and it is a big Yet—his *dulce domum*, on which his family has been seated for centuries, is his own. In all mundane matters he is his own master, independent, free, and sturdy; for his labour, untainted by the breath of demagogue defection, or by any desire to "keep up appear-

ances" or live beyond his income, or by envy of his betters, is given freely, and the pride of having done his best invests him with a natural dignity with which no one who looks under the superficial surface of life can fail to be impressed. I think it was Lowell who said that every Scotchman bore about with him, no matter from what bleak, unlovely provincial town he came, the fixed idea that "doubtless God could have created a better place, but doubtless He never did"; and this is the sort of happy conviction one reads out of the Tyrolers' thoughts and words. I read somewhere of a fiery old Scotch General, travelling in Italy, so jealous of the superiority of his own country that the most timid praise of anything Italian excited his fury, and the mild suggestion of an Englishman, that at least the Italian lower classes were superior to our own in point of sobriety, was vehemently disputed on the ground that the English would be sober if they had only such sour wine to swallow! Whether it is for this reason—for cheap sour stuff is the national beverage—or for other good cause, it is certain that one sees very little drunkenness among the Tyrolese peasant population, and none whatever among women. In fact, in nearly forty years I do not remember ever to have seen an inebriated female of the class I am referring to. Abject poverty is equally rare; old people that are beyond work, and have no relations left to take care of them, are taken over by the community to which they belong, and they are quartered out among the householders, the period of their "visit" to each house being

settled according to the number of houses belonging to the community, and in proportion to the taxes each householder pays. In larger villages in main valleys, a less primitive manner of providing for aged and incapable persons is adopted, a tax being levied upon householders which pays for a "house for those incapable for work"—not a workhouse in the usual sense of the word—as well as for food and clothes, all of the simplest.

The tenacity with which the Tyrolese peasant sticks to his native characteristics, little influenced by the inrush of strangers, is as remarkable as it is refreshing. Take the peasants round Meran, those tall, broad-shouldered men, clad in their quaint native dress, with strikingly strong-looking faces and aquiline profiles shaded by picturesque, betasselled hats. Coming in on market-days from the surrounding country, they stalk through the arcaded streets of their curious old-world town, which are filled with fashionably-dressed money-spending people from all parts of the world. The latter eye them with unabashed curiosity, as if they were wax figures at Madame Tussaud's, and quite forgetting who is the host and who is the visitor. And though the streets be lit by electricity, and you will find telephones fitted up in most of those quaint, low little shops under the arches, and, in fact, all modern improvements more practically applied than in some big cities one could mention, these pensive men and women pursue the even course of their ancient habits, quite undisturbed by the idle, chattering, money-

spending crowd drawn to the spot by the exquisite scenery or by climatic advantages.

The dress of these peasants is the same as their forbears wore 400 years ago: the best silk gown is still handed down from generation to generation, as did in old days the noble dames who lived in those forty odd castles in Meran's immediate neighbourhood. The huge baskets which many of the women, as well as the men, carry on their backs, and which are so big that they must be left outside the curious little shops when a purchase has to be made; the extraordinarily clumsy and out-of-date-looking waggons in which they bring their produce to market; and the even more antediluvian-looking yokes with which the patient bullocks or cows that draw these curious vehicles are harnessed —nay, even the immense umbrellas, or *Regendächer*, literally rain-roofs, made of red or green cotton, with huge brass handles, that are produced on rainy days—these one and all betray how little the waves of modernity have achieved so far against the granite rock on which the social fabric of these people is more solidly based than that of any other country I know. Speak to any one of these sixteenth-century men or women in their own broad dialect—they are slow of perception if addressed in an unfamiliar tongue—and you will receive a smiling reply; and if you have taken the wrong turning, he or she will walk the length of the street to put you right, and, if it is near meal-time, wish you a "good appetite." How different to the boorish reply of the surly Swiss burgher peasant! In

comparison to him his Tyrolese compeer is an aristocrat from the soles of his feet to the crown of his tasselled and corded hat.

In speaking of Tyrolese peasant communities, it must not be forgotten that these consist exclusively of peasants. There is no lord of the manor, no gentry, no country magnate or retired civilian or officer, dwelling among them; even the priest, whose cloth puts him at the head of his flock, is generally a peasant by birth, who, after passing through the seminary at Sâlzburg, Trent, or Brixen, the three principal Tyrolese sees, has finally reached what to him and his family is the height of ambition—viz., first the chaplaincy, and later the curacy, in a peasant village, not infrequently his native one.

In all worldly affairs the innkeeper of the village plays an important part, for, as a rule, he is the richest as well as the most influential man in the community. Like every one else, he is a peasant pure and simple, but he generally can afford to keep one or two *Knechte* —*i.e.*, male helps; labourers would not be the right word—who live in the house and eat at his table; for, of course, such a thing as a separate table for master and mistress is unknown in a peasant's house. The innkeepers have always played an important rôle, and the *Wirthshaus*, which is the centre of the social life of the community, is the scene of the feasts that are given at weddings and christenings, and of the solemn *Todtenmahl*, or "meal of the dead," given after funerals, where the deceased person's kith and kin assemble and

gorge. As the inn is the only house large enough for such assemblies, and is the rendezvous every Sunday after morning service for the adult male population, all business is transacted, and the affairs of one's own as well as those of one's neighbour are discussed, there, though I will say that the Tyrolese peasants are the people least addicted to backbiting and tittle-tattle that I know. As a natural consequence, mine host is the man who has his finger on the pulse of the community. He knows the ins and outs of every man in the valley financially and socially, and as he has to act as his own "chucker out," and play the village policeman if revellers come to blows on his premises, this burly personage has to be reckoned with in more ways than one. In past days this pre-eminence was even more marked, for he was then the only person who knew anything about the outer world, and all news trickled into the valley through him. In the Napoleonic wars the innkeepers of Tyrol acted as the generalissimos, Andreas Hofer being not the only heroic leader who belonged to that class. What sturdy characters were to be found among them the following perfectly authentic incident will show: Peter Mayr, or, as he was called, the *Wirth an der Mahr*, showed to the French invaders that a simple Tyrolese peasant knew how to die as a gentleman. Taken prisoner by the French in a fight after they had promulgated a decree that instant death would follow any further attempt at armed resistance, Peter's life depended upon his denying that he knew of this decree. This he refused to do,

and though his wife, who was with child, begged him on her knees to do so, and even the French officer pointed out to him that this was the only chance of saving his life, brave Peter remained steadfast, and was led out and shot.

Much might be written about land tenure in Tyrol. Putting it quite briefly, the German-speaking part of Tyrol is undoubtedly the country where peasant ownership of land has experienced least changes. Of all European countries it affords the best field for investigation for those taking interest in the ever live land question. One often hears the Swiss land tenure held up as a system than which none is better, and though there are certain features appertaining to both countries, circumstances have somewhat invalidated the Swiss system. Not long ago, a leading article in one of our most influential weeklies spoke in the most laudatory terms of the Switzers system. But I think the writer of this leader convicts himself out of his own mouth by citing some of the various occupations by which his Swiss "peasant" supplements his income. "These men," he says, "leave their farms for the three summer months and hire themselves out as mountain-guides, or porters, or mule-drivers, or coachmen, or take a position as boots in an hotel." But can men who absent themselves from their farms for the three important months of the year, augmenting their incomes in the manner indicated, be called in any sense genuine peasants? A far better illustration of the ideal condition of peasant ownership of land can be found in Tyrol in the side-valleys, where

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a class of men exists that has disappeared from Switzerland, where the immense prosperity introduced by the tens of thousands of tourists and the many millions of francs circulated by them has changed the domestic conditions of the native population to a degree only those who look under the surface of things can realize. In those parts of Tyrol so far spared by the invasion—and I am inclined to believe that the advent of the tourist is not always a real advantage, however much it may increase the wealth of the population—one finds conditions that have remained unaltered for centuries; in fact, since the free peasant of Tyrol became a factor in the country's history, a period that takes one back to very early times, for it is a well-established historical fact that Tyrol's rural population had freed itself of the feudal yoke much earlier and more thoroughly than any of their neighbours, not excluding even the Swiss. A Tyrolese *Bauer* (peasant) would at once cease to be what this name indicates were he to absent himself from his homestead and engage in occupations so entirely outside his sphere as turning coachman or hotel boots. The splitting up of the farms into minute portions, of the size of pocket-handkerchiefs, to which the writer of the leading article alluded as one of the necessary consequences of large families, does not prevail in the Unter Innthal, for the Austrian law has provided a most salutary preventive. When a peasant dies, the *Bezirks Gericht*, or district judicial court, causes his property to be valued by sworn officials, the values being taken at a low rate. The

total is divided in equal shares among his children, the widow ranking as a child ;* but as there is, of course, never enough ready money to pay out each portion in cash, the sums are placed as mortgages on the property. The property is given over to the eldest son or daughter (in some places younger sons come before elder sisters), it being his or her aim to make enough out of the place to pay the low interest on the mortgages and gradually pay them off. As in some cases, when there are a large number of children and deaths follow each other rapidly, it would be impossible to proceed on this system for many generations, the Government, which in these things takes a most paternal interest in the domestic affairs of this, the most useful class in the State, may order the farm to be sold. And when this is done the money is divided between all ; but it may not be sold piecemeal if its size would fail to afford sustenance for more than one family. What this minimum is varies according to localities and soil.

In nothing does the tenacity of the Tyrolese to the old show itself more than in their staunch loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty, and, as it is needless to add, in their unswerving adherence to their old Church, so

* One primal condition of the Austrian law of inheritance, to which all classes (except a few of the highest aristocracy) are subject, provides that no man can leave away more than half his entire property from his family. In other words, one moiety of all estates *must* go in equal shares to his children. Over the other half he can dispose as he desires.

that Tyrol is to-day still the stronghold of the Ultramontane party. The intolerance which Rome once showed to those of other religions is now disappearing, and for the last forty years non-Catholics can hold land and enjoy the same privileges as Roman Catholics. During all the years I have been in the country I have never experienced the slightest hostility from Roman Catholics, and I know this is also the case with other foreigners. In politics, of course, there is still hot antagonism ; but politics in the Dual Empire seem to be so surcharged with strife and dissension as to be worse than the discord produced by the Home Rule question with us.

But as there is nothing immutable in our erratic world, even the persistence with which the Tyrolese cling to their ancestors' customs, habits, and principles, has gradually to give way, and the new order of things is pushing in the thin end of the wedge in the chink where assault does its most deadly work—*i.e.*, the purse. Cheap but shoddy, and hence unsubstantial, machine-made goods are gradually ousting the rough home-spun frieze, woven from home-grown wool, the coarse but everlasting linen made of home-grown and home-spun flax, the clumsy but durable home-made boots cobbled on the premises out of leather that once covered one of those hardy, hard-working cows, the produce of which fed the family and whose carcase paid the taxes. For hundreds of years the peasant covered his house with larch shingles, held in place by heavy stones not requiring many nails, the angle of the roof being that

of the classic temples, and therefore a pleasing one to the eye of an artist. But the price of wood has gone up two or three fold, and fire insurance people inform him that, if he will cover his house with tiles instead of with shingles, his premium will be less, and, besides, the roof will last three times as long. So tiles oust shingles, and as the roof can then have a much steeper pitch, and its eaves need not protrude as they did of old, the picturesque domestic architecture is gradually being metamorphosed, except in the more out-of-the-way corners of Tyrol, into ugly modernity. Everywhere unsightly electric-wire poles are going up, for the exploitation of the abundant water-power in the country is being carried on with a vigour more creditable to the business proclivities of the people than it is pleasing to those benighted individuals who would fain see Tyrol's idyllic scenery continue unmarred by these and other eyesores civilization has introduced.

Nowadays, when the strong light of publicity is thrown upon the financial exigencies of the lower orders, it may prove of interest to hear how a Tyrolese peasant makes the two ends of his resources meet. For this purpose I am tempted to cite the budget of an average household in an average district, namely, that of a peasant in Enneberg, a valley in the German-speaking part of the Dolomites, where, on account of its elevation and poorness of soil, only the hardier cereals grow. The balance-sheet is a poor one, though not so much so as in many of the yet more elevated valleys, where the peasant's lot is even harder. Our peasant's

property stands in the books of the Government land-registry for the district as valued at £600. There are mortgages of £300 on it, representing the shares of his brother and sisters, on which he has to pay 4 per cent. interest. The family consists of six people, of whom four are capable of farm work.

He possesses eight head of cattle, twelve sheep, and two goats. His land, etc., produces annually :

	£	s.	d.
Barley and beans to the value of... ...	13	10	0
480 cwt. of hay, worth	90	10	0
Milk, 2,820 litres, or 2,482 quarts, at 1¾d.	18	2	0
Butter, 123 lb., at 10d. per lb.	5	2	6
Three calves at £2	6	0	0
Three head of cattle at £15	45	0	0
Total of income, including trifles ...	184	0	0

	£	s.	d.
Of this he requires for his own use produce worth	136	0	0
He spends in cash on provisions... ...	15	0	0
Clothes and boots for the family... ...	9	0	0
Small wants, such as tobacco and gifts to the Church	1	10	0
Repairs	4	0	0
Taxes	4	0	0
Premium for fire insurance	0	8	0
Seed	2	0	0
Interest at 4 per cent. on mortgages ...	12	0	0
	183	18	0

Practically all the cash he sees in the twelve months is derived from the sale of his three beasts (they are replaced by the three calves), and it is easy to conceive what the loss of even one of them by an accident or by disease would mean to that frugal family, who have meat only on high fête-days, and where coffee and sugar are luxuries indulged in only on Sundays.

How badly this peasant would fare had he not his children (their education in the village school is free) to help him, thus saving him the wages of one or more male or female helps, it is not difficult to calculate.

To complete my picture of peasants' finances, I must add that, of the thirty-three properties that formed the community in question, only four were entirely free from all mortgages, and that on the twenty-nine remaining homesteads (the thirty-three were valued at a total of something over £16,000) there were registered mortgages amounting to £8,000, or half the total value, and, if one left out of reckoning the four unencumbered ones, rather more than 50 per cent.

That in the remoter parts of the country among old people a certain amount of superstition still exists is but a natural consequence of the surroundings amid which these people live. As I am writing these pages a local paper* reports a typical incident, and, considering the scene is within sight of the capital on the Stubaithal railway, one can imagine that in really remote

* *Innsbrucker Nachrichten*, February 11, 1908.

localities the peasantry is even more credulous. The following is a verbatim translation of the account :

"Towards the end of last month there came to a peasant woman living in Mutters a voluble stranger with ingratiating manners, who in the course of conversation informed the old woman that the world was about to come to an end. He managed to tell her this so plausibly that she believed him implicitly, so much so that, when he suggested that she should give him her money, as hard cash was not needed henceforth, she handed him all the ready money she had in the house—*i.e.*, a sum of 226 kronen. With this the stranger decamped, having a high time with the cash."

The strangest part of the story is, however, to follow, for the man, who evidently must have been a good Catholic and had probably made a clean breast of it in the confessional, became in his turn the victim of credulity ; for so vividly did the priest paint the punishment of hell-fire, that he repaired to the nearest *Gendarmerie* (rural police post) and surrendered himself, making a full confession of the swindle.

CHAPTER III

LIFE IN THE UNTER INNTHAL

Our picture of the peasantry in North Tyrol would not be complete were we to omit giving an account of their amusements, of their singing and dancing. We must also outline some of the more serious sides of peasant life.

Winter is the time when the peasant has the leisure to go in for dancing, and Carnival is the period when the Church permits such frivolous amusements. Let us pay a winter visit to one of the isolated lateral valleys, the Brandenbergthal, and see for ourselves what a peasants' feast is like.

Who has not heard Tyrolese sing and seen them dance, when even "side show" exhibitions in London include such performances among the most popular "turns" of suburban repertoire? But what we see on such occasions—the sight always makes me shudder—is as far removed from the reality as night is from day. In the first place, these singers and dancers are generally *falsche Tyroler*—fakes—and in the second place, even if they are the true article, they are invariably dressed as no Tyroler thinks of dressing when at home. From

the days of the once so famous Rainer troop of Tyrolese singers and zither-players who, half a century ago, played before all the crowned heads of Europe, and who were the first of the sort to appear in the great world, it has become a dogma of belief that the proper way to be clad was to don a sort of beautified and unreal copy of their national costume—the Germans call them *Salon Tyroler*—and it has become firmly impressed upon these people that, to succeed at public resorts, they had to follow the ridiculous example of their celebrated predecessors. Of this kind of tomfoolery we shall see nothing in the Brandenberg inn, whither the reader is invited to follow the writer on a wintry walk of many hours' duration, a tramp the minor hardships of which a good old-fashioned snowstorm did not tend to decrease. My "dress clothes," consisting of a change of leather shorts and frieze jacket, I carried with me in my capacious *Rücksack*, together with a little present intended for the young couple at whose wedding dance I had been invited to assist. The formal letter of invitation from the humble peasant folk is a curiosity in itself. Penned by the chief scrivener in the valley, the schoolmaster, in terms that might be used towards a royal personage, it was sent by the hand of the official "Inviter," a queerly-caparisoned individual, holding in his hand a wand adorned with ribbons and artificial flowers, of which, also, there were some in his hat and in his buttonhole. A long speech of invitation, reeled off so fast that I understood but little, accompanied the presentation of the letter. On the envelope of the

missive, at the back, instead of the seal, there was fastened, as a sort of wedding favour, a little bunch of red and white leathern tags. This ceremony had been gone through weeks before, and not to attend in person at the wedding would have been a dire offence. As Carnival falls in the dead season, from an agricultural point of view, it is the peasants' favourite time for weddings and other festivities, the summer and autumn months leaving little leisure. And peasants' weddings are affairs that want leisure and a fairly healthy constitution, if you desire to "see it through" and keep up dancing for two or, as was the case in this instance, three nights running.

There used to be, and to some extent there exist still, a great variety of wedding customs in Tyrol; for as the inhabitants are really a varied agglomeration of different ancient nationalities, remnants of various races that at different early periods of history took refuge in the then inaccessible fastnesses of the Alps, the different valleys, each a little realm for itself, contain a population whose idiosyncrasies also vary more or less considerably. The peasants of the Unter Innthal are by far the most cheery and fun-loving, while the Ober Innthaler and the Pusterthaler distinguish themselves by a more sombre way of taking life.

The Church, too, seems to have a severer grip on these people, and there is far less merrymaking dancing, and singing at festivals than in the song-loving north-eastern part of the country, as well as in

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the adjoining Bavarian Highlands, with the inhabitants of which, in spite of century-long wars, they have much akin.

Our Brandenberg wedding is of the "middling sort," the two other kinds being the poor and the rich class, the standard being the number of invited guests. At the lowest-grade wedding there are up to thirty-five, at the middling up to eighty or ninety, and the rich ones are attended by as many as 150 or 200 bidden friends. The giving of wedding presents is a business-like and solemn affair, the gifts consisting of a certain sum of money regulated according to ancient custom. After the interminable wedding meal, which begins at eleven o'clock in the morning and lasts for many hours, comes the *Ehrengang*. A large brass or pewter dish is placed in front of the godmother of the bride, the mother being rigorously excluded from participating at her daughter's wedding, so much so that she must not be seen even in church. Next to the godmother an uncle or other elderly male relation takes his seat, having in front of him a sheet of paper and pen and ink. As each guest files past the table he hands his present to the godmother, who places it in the dish, where it is covered with a napkin, and the name of the donor and amount is entered carefully on the record sheet. Precisely the same number of silver florins will be given by the newly-wedded pair on the occasion of the next wedding in the family of the donor, so that really the proceeds of the *Ehrengang* can be estimated ahead. Besides covering the expenses

of the wedding meal, it is a welcome assistance to a young couple on the eve of starting housekeeping.

At the side of the table where this is going on stand the bridegroom and bride, the former having a bottle of wine and an ever-full glass, the latter a basket filled to the brim with some sort of cake. As each guest passes them, he empties a glass to the health of the couple, and is given a cake which he takes home to his family. Similar pocketing goes on on the part of the careful old peasant women who sweep the tables of the remains of the wedding feast, which are taken to the little ones at home, carefully tied up in handkerchiefs. As soon as the *Ehrengang* is over, the fun begins, the gay strains of the musicians in the adjoining dancing-room, where they have been tuning their violin, flute, and cornet for the past half-hour, being an irresistible attraction to the younger members of the party.

The opening round is danced by the bride, led out by the most honoured guest present, the rest standing round the room looking on. That over, the general romp commences, and faster and more furious does it grow as the older and more sedate spirits of the company leave the room to retire to unlimited beer and wine in the general *Schankstube* of the inn.

Tyrolese dancing is a robust exercise. Only very agile, athletic young fellows can excel in it ; one of the most elaborate figures is to throw oneself down upon one's knees, fold both arms over the chest, and bend back the body till the back of the head touches

the floor, on which a rat-tat is sounded, and then with one powerful jerk, without touching the floor with the hands, regain an erect position. Another pose is to sound a regular tattoo on the boards with the bare knees, or to jump high up into the air, as high as the generally rather low ceiling will permit, and to come down on the bare knees. These latter seem to be inured to knocks and blows that would lame an ordinary individual for life. But they also look as if they were cast of iron, with ropes of muscle to bind them together. These capers, jumps, and strange twisting of the body are accompanied by shrill whistles, slapping of the thighs and of the boot-soles with their horny hands, and peculiar smacking of the lips and tongue in imitation of the gyrations and strange sounds emitted by the love-sick blackcock and capercaillie on the surrounding mountains. In the mating season these birds pirouette and flap their wings and go through other funny antics to attract the attention of the hen birds.

Of late years the more violent forms of their dances have gone out of fashion; thus, one figure which I often witnessed in old days, and, in fact, took my share in, was the *Her-heben* or lifting of the male dancers. This extraordinary feat of strength on the part of the girl is performed by her lifting her partner, or, rather, assisting him to lift his legs so that the soles go pattering against the ceiling. Placing his hands on the girl's shoulders, he lifts himself up and beats time with his feet on the beams of the low room, while the girl,

with her arms akimbo, slowly gyrates along to the rhythm of the music. As the men are generally strapping young giants, the burden thus supported by the fair one's shoulders is tremendous.

No description of a peasants' dance would be complete without some reference to the singing of *Schnadahüpfler*, as the couplets, consisting generally of four lines, are called. These verses, accompanied preferably by the zither, when sung in the right spirit and amid the right surroundings, are as charming as they are quaint and amusing. Charles Boner, in his capital book on sport in the Bavarian Highlands, gives a few English renderings, from which the following specimens may be cited, although a great deal of the "go" is lost by the translation. Being written in a dialect, it is also almost impossible to render them in another language.

"A good *Schnadahüpfler*
Must be bold and daring;
Must climb the high mountains,
For no danger caring.

"And love has a language
That's everywhere known,
And when that's no more spoken
The sun will fall down.

"If every star there
Were but a fair lass,
I wish the whole sky then
Would fall into the grass.

"The Turk and the Russian
Are nothing to me,
If only my Nanny
And I do agree.

"And were there no flowers
The bee's life were sad,
And were there no lasses
The lads would go mad.

"And a blossom don't grow
On a dry withered stump,
And you can't sing a song
If your heart's a dead lump."

A musical people by nature, as are the Tyrolese, full of latent poetic feeling, singing comes to them naturally. The young girls herding in lonely solitude their cattle, and the sturdy young wood-fellers, when their day's work is over, while away the evening hours sitting in front of their huts practising the melodious *Jodel*, or composing humorous couplets in which some peculiarity or weakness of a male rival is taken off, or in which some pretty charmer's attractions are commented upon, or they embody a challenge to do deeds of daring to an antagonist.

At these peasant dances a couplet or two is sung after each dance, say every ten minutes or so. As the tune comes to an end, a couple steps hand-in-hand before the slightly raised tribune upon which the three or four musicians are seated, and either to an accompanying tune, or without one, the young man, with his hat well on one side, will sing his *Schnadahüpfler* couplet.

If it is of a challenging import, as they mostly are when the fun of the evening waxes and heads get heated and hearts begin to thump, the song will be taken up by a rival who, also holding his girl by the hand, will step up opposite to the first pair and answer the verses with some other taunt or allusion to some weak point in the challenger's armour. And often when Greek meets Greek, this singing against each other will go on for half an hour, the one whose stock of couplets first gives out being the vanquished, while the victor signalizes his superiority by a particularly galling parting shot, receiving his reward by the laughter and shouts of applause with which he is greeted.

If the intercourse between young people of both sexes is a free one in winter-time, it is doubly so in summer, when they associate under circumstances of even greater liberty. For then a girl dwells often for months quite alone in her chalet near the mountain-tops as sole guardian of her father's or her employer's herd of cattle. Or, again, when the time comes to gather in the crop of mountain hay on elevated patches of grass-land, half a dozen lusty young people will be crowded together at night-time in small hay-barns, the only available shelter in regions close to timber-line.

In Norway and Sweden, where a similar free intercourse between the sexes prevails, statistics of a startling nature illustrate the results, and in Tyrol, where an even more robustly joyous temperament than that of the Norseman distinguishes the native, things

are not much better; in fact, were it not for the restraining influence of the Church, matters would be worse, for the law, which prevents a young fellow marrying before he can show sufficient means to support a wife and family, almost forces young persons from the path of strict morality.

But there are good points about a condition of things that at first strikes one as reprehensible. Rarely does one hear of a man forsaking his girl, and when this does occur the gay Lothario will have a bad time. By the ultimate marriage of the parents the children are legitimized, and, in his future walks in life, the fact that there are two or three half-grown boys or girls to assist on the farm when the young peasant at last steps into his father's shoes is by no means a drawback, for children are welcomed from every point of view by the practical Tyrolese peasant.

The reader will probably ask whether in Tyrol there is the same disastrous movement of the rural population into towns, whether the son of a peasant will always consider it his highest ambition to be a tiller of the soil. But for the results of the *Allgemeine Wehrpflicht*, or universal military service, to which every young man, rich or poor, count or peasant, has to submit, one could give a very categorical denial. As it is, there is a certain tendency to exchange the frugal mode of life led by their forefathers for a less monotonous existence in towns, but it is still of insignificant proportions in comparison with what is going on in other countries. What it will be in future it is

impossible to say, when the evil results, the only evil results of universal military service, have had more time to undermine what centuries have instilled into the peasant's nature, and by making him acquainted with the pleasures of town life inculcates a dislike to the occupation of his forbears. In any case, this process of weaning him from the land will be a slow one in a country where the peasant has still a healthful pride in honest work, good sound common sense, coupled with a total absence of that degrading desire to emulate superior classes, and the unhealthy striving to "keep up appearances," which in other countries is so often the cause of domestic ruin.

There is, however, one exception to this rule—one ambition to which the Tyrolese peasant is a prey. It is to see one of his sons become a priest or enter a profession; and this is not so much the consequence of his own instincts, but the result of the circumstances which have surrounded him from his cradle, and partly also of the religion in whose teachings he blindly believes. To have the cleverest of his offspring a member of the sacred order, to have a *Hochwürden* sitting at his table, a Reverend Sir before whom every Sunday the whole community kneels, seems to him the highest goal of paternal pride.

The following brief account will show how this result is brought about. If the boy shows ability in the village school above the low average of the other peasants' children, the *Herr Pfarrer*—the priest—or the *Herr Lehrer*—the schoolmaster—will single

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him out for a student's life. The former will tell the parents that he should be dedicated to the church; the latter, nowadays, will advise them to let the boy go through the *Gymnasium*, which is the classical public school of Austria, with the object of his eventually going to the University in order to study law or medicine. With us, where considerable means would be needed to start a boy on such an ambitious professional career, one hears with astonishment of a poor peasant, with whom ready money is ever the scarcest commodity, entertaining such designs. It means that the boy has to go to the nearest town, dress in town clothes, live and board away from his family, buy books—all large items for the parents' purse, even though the tuition itself is gratis. To attain this end the whole family will readily make every conceivable sacrifice. The few poor little luxuries—we would call them necessaries of life—probably the father's tobacco, will be as cheerfully renounced as the dish of meat on great fête-days, while a few florins will be gained by selling the family's principal staff of life, the home-made butter, substituting some cheap margarine fat for it.

If the *Herr Pfarrer's* advice has been followed, and the boy's career is to be the Church, his sponsor will probably have found him a place in one of the seminaries for the clergy, overcrowded as these institutes always are. But if this is not the case, and he is trying for a lay profession, the boy's lot will be a very hard one; for the few florins a month which

his parents can spare him will hardly do more than clothe him. The only way out of it is to join the already large contingent of so-called *Bettelstudenten*—beggar students, to give a literal translation—who are enabled to pursue their studies by the charity of citizens.

In Austrian towns boasting of Gymnasiums and Universities, the school authorities keep a book in which charitable citizens inscribe what they are prepared to do for poor students. This assistance usually takes the form of free meals. One man will take upon himself to give two or three students a free dinner twice or thrice a week ; another will assist by offering suppers or breakfasts ; and this kindly help is extended in most cases by tradespeople or minor officials who live in what we would call very humble circumstances themselves, with, at best, one general servant. By some of them the student will be treated as a member of the family, eating with them ; by others, and they are often the richer, the poor little student is relegated to the kitchen. Occasionally some return is demanded in the way of helping the children with their lessons, in which case midnight oil is burnt, for, in addition to this extra work and the always very long school-hours, the student has to prepare his own tasks for next day. What wonder that the apple-cheeked peasant's boy, what with scanty food, late hours, and an unhealthy life, gradually begins to look wan, the inevitable spectacles giving his face a pinched and aged look. Eight years of Gymnasium and four years of University leave him in the end a very different-looking

individual to his robust brother who has remained true to the soil. But has he not gained the goal of his and of his parents' ambition? The dreaded *Matura*—the final examination closing his career at the University—has at length been successfully passed, and with it he has gained what in his eyes is an immeasurable advantage. Instead of having to serve three years as a common soldier, he is now able to absolve his military service by joining for one year; and instead of having to serve as a private, he is a *Freiwilliger*, or cadet, enjoying many privileges which the unfortunate "three yearer" is unable to obtain.*

And if we glance at the young priest just emerging from his seminary, the picture will not be very different. An emaciated body, a pale, pasty face, black, long-flowing robes, will make him even more unrecognizable. Presently the great day of his life and of that of his parents will come round—*i.e.*, his ordination, or the *Primiz*, as it is called. This is a costly affair for the family, for it means a general jubilation and a free feast for the village at the parents' expense. If their purse be too thinly lined to defray the cost, relations, and even neighbours, come forward in no niggardly spirit to do honour to an event which stands to the credit of the whole community.

There is a curious custom attached to these *Primiz* celebrations. A maiden of unblemished reputation—

* In Austria a youth has still to serve three years, instead of two as in Germany, but it is anticipated that the example of the latter power will soon be followed.

generally it is some female relation of the young priest —impersonates the latter's bride—*i.e.*, the Church. Arrayed in the usual bridal costume, with a wreath of orange blossoms on her head, carrying on a gold-embroidered cushion a gilt crown, the "bride" heads a procession of villagers, and thus enters the church. There she is present when the young cleric reads his first Mass and preaches his first sermon. After that the whole assembly partakes of the feast provided in the principal inn. A strange contrast to the assembled youth of the village, his fellow-scholars at the village school, healthy-looking, stalwart-limbed youths and blooming girls with merry eyes, all arrayed in their fête-day finery, is presented by the young ecclesiast. His wan, bloodless face, rendered all the paler by the long fasting and penance that preceded his ordination, is as painful a sight as is his emaciated body and his stooping gait. But as we look round at the older clergy, the various Church dignitaries that have assembled to do honour to their young brother cleric, we observe that the easy, quiet life amid bucolic surroundings enjoyed by them soon obliterates all signs of the hardships they have undergone, and we may be sure in a few years' time our hero will also have assumed that comfortable rotundity of body and that cheerful, complacent look that are so conspicuously represented among the elders of his cloth.

After this long digression we must hasten to retrace our steps to the main Unter Innthal. Taking train at the station of Brixlegg, a thriving summer resort,

whose reputation as the scene of a decennial Passion Play has spread as wide almost as that of Ober Ammergau, we cross by a fine railway-bridge the rushing Inn. In summer and early autumn it is bank-full, and its waters are more or less mud-stained, for it drains a huge area of glaciers and eternal snowfields. In late autumn and winter, however, the river becomes clear as a crystal, and of a beautiful blue-green colour. Strange it seems that such a fine waterway should be so entirely neglected as this one is ; not a boat or steamer or barge navigates a stream which, at any rate, from Innsbruck downwards till it meets the Danube at Passau, contains no obstruction in the shape of falls or dangerous rapids, though the strength of the current would necessitate the use of suitable craft for up-stream navigation.* Of the three means of communication lying here side by side, the river, the excellently kept-up *Reichs Strasse*, or imperial highroad, and the railway, the latter has appropriated the entire traffic. The river and the highroad, were it not for occasional automobiles which in summer time spin along through the lovely scenery, would be almost as trafficless as they were two thousand years ago.

In medieval times there floated on the ample bosom of the mighty Danube, the monarch of European rivers, and its important tributaries, of which the Inn is the largest, the most numerous commercial fleet

* One of the most delightful canoe trips in the world would be the trip down the Inn from the Ober Innthal to Passau. For some reason or other it is hardly ever made.

of the time. The huge flat-bottomed barges made easy passages down the stream, and were towed back by horses in short stages that made the up-journey a most tedious one, even in those days of slow journeys. The history of this ancient water-borne traffic is still to be written, but existing records provide us with many instance of great personages using the Inn for their journeys. The great Maximilian made his last journey in a barge down this very stretch which we are looking at, when, with a sad heart, he turned his back on Innsbruck, whose citizens had mortally offended their old benefactor. Death came to him as in wintry weather he was making his way to Vienna ; while his grandson, the mighty Charles V., on a memorable occasion also made use of the Inn to pursue his return journey to Imperial Vienna, after his enforced exile in Villach, whither he had fled to escape the armies led by his erstwhile favourite, Maurice of Saxony. It was during this flight from his capital, Innsbruck, that Charles crossed the Brenner Pass under strange circumstances, to which we shall have to refer presently. And, again, another Imperator, ruler of the great Holy Roman Empire, made a last journey down the Inn—*i.e.*, the handsome Francis I., consort of Maria Theresa. But this time it was a funeral cortège that took all that was left of the pleasure-loving ruler back to Vienna, death having overtaken him at the Opera held in Innsbruck, during the great festivities which were given in celebration of his son's wedding with the Infanta of Spain.

Three old castles greet the eye soon after leaving Brixlegg ; they are on the left-hand side as we travel up the valley. The first we see is Schloss Matzen, the home of this volume. Its round tower marks the site of an early Roman station, *Masciacum*, that defended the road to Noricum. The castle chapel was consecrated more than 700 years ago (November 23, 1176), so that it can look back upon a good bit of history in the shaping of which this once strong place took its share. At least, on one occasion when the mighty Knights of Frundsberg sat here, and Matzen withstood a lengthy siege by three Bavarian Dukes (1410), it prevented the enemy from penetrating further into the country. In later times, when all this part of the Unter Innthal turned out untold wealth in the shape of silver ore, Matzen had the good fortune to become the property of another famous family, the Fuggers, probably the most renowned financiers that ever existed, whose members became "dear and faithful sons" of Popes, "honoured and trusty friends" of Emperors, and who for upwards of a century held the purse-strings of Europe in their hands. With the fall of this great house in consequence of the Thirty Years War, Matzen also came upon evil times, and experienced all imaginable vicissitudes at the hands of Nature and man. One can hardly realize, looking at its present defenceless condition, that it was once one of the strongholds of the country, and was able to withstand a determined siege.

The next castle is Lichtwehr, its somewhat for-

bidding exterior showing that time has been less cruel to it in leaving some of its original defences intact. At one period the Inn River, which now leaves both castles on its right bank, flowed between them, the distance from the square tower of Lichtwehr to the round tower of Matzen being less than 500 yards. According to a legend, these two castles were once inhabited by two brothers (some accounts will have it that they were cousins) of the Frundsberg clan, between whom a deadly feud raged. One day the Frundsberger of Lichtwehr took a pot shot at his brother standing at a window in Matzen, and, notwithstanding the great distance, scored a bull's-eye by plugging his victim with fatal effect. They both are said to lie buried in the idyllic Mariathal, a nunnery founded by the family in 1267, it is said, in expiation of this unfortunate little mishap. Queen Elizabeth's grant to the cloister made in that year, by which she ordered that sixty mule-loads of wine, oil, and other necessaries, might be annually imported free of all dues and custom charges, is still in existence as a proof of the great interest taken in the foundation by this martyr. For this Queen Elizabeth was the heroine of one of the great medieval tragedies, being the mother of the golden-haired Conradin, the last of the mighty Hohenstaufen, whose heroic attempt to reconquer his patrimony from his uncle's murderer was ended by the headsman's axe at Naples, A.D. 1268.

The last of the trio of castles, Kropfsberg, with the

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exception of a small gate-house, a complete ruin—but a most picturesque one—reminds one of stirring times a trifle later than the period in which occurred the last-mentioned events. Kropfsberg's great day occurred in October, 1416, when the little chapel, of which now only a groined window or two are left, was the scene of the famous reconciliation between two brothers: Frederick with the Empty Pocket, Duke of Tyrol, and his stalwart brother, Ernest the Iron, Duke of Styria; and here on this neutral ground—for Kropfsberg was a stronghold of the Archbishop of Salzburg—the two brothers at last ended these internecine hostilities, in which streams of blood had been shed and dozens of proud castles had been laid low, by shaking hands and becoming friends again. We are told that a vast host of great nobles and Church lords were present, as witnesses of the reconciliation, so the scene was a most impressive one, no doubt.

Kropfsberg stands on a hill at the juncture of the Zillerthal with the main Inn valley, and from its three great towers great expanses of both valleys can be seen. The Zillerthal, to the furthest extremity of which leads a narrow-gauge line, which can take the first prize as the slowest railway in Christendom, used to be more visited by English people in the old days than it is now. As the home of the far-famed singing and zither-playing Tyrolers, our fathers and grandfathers visited the Zillerthal on their Continental grand tours in their own comfortable coaches, hiring post-horses and staying for a day or two in many of the

curious roadside towns and villages. Nowadays, people, deigning to travel only by express trains, will not take time to use the branch lines, much less visit these roadside points of interest. The line we are now alluding to branches off at Jenbach, the next station after Brixlegg, and takes one in an hour and a half to Mayrhofen (under twenty miles), at the end of the Zillerthal. Here the valley splits up in four glens that diverge like the fingers of a hand, and run right up to glaciers and vast snowfields. These glens, or *Gründe*, as they are called in local parlance, are respectively the Duxerthal, running off in a westerly direction ; the Zemmgrund, branching off south-west ; the Stillup, to the south-east ; and the Zillergrund, due east. Few finer alpine walks exist in the whole of the Alps than are provided by these four glens, for they take one right into the heart of the ice region by easy paths up which mules can go. Baedeker gives one all the necessary information about them. The Duxerthal is the home of one of the hardiest lot of peasants in Tyrol, and close to the village of Hinter Dux, at an altitude of more than 5,000 feet, lies, almost at the foot of a huge glacier, a rustic little bathing establishment built where a natural spring of hot water (72° Fahr.) gushes from the ground. Though no longer in quite the primitive condition in which it was when I first bathed in it, it is still fairly unspoilt, but I suppose its Casino days are but a question of years. When I first knew it, the rock-bound pool of hot water had over it a primitive "lean to" of boards, with a crazy door of

which the key was kept in the little inn. It was handed to one on paying ten kreuzers (two pence), and if one wanted a towel, one had to use the bedroom towel, which was certainly not larger than a good-sized pocket-handkerchief, and of the coarsest homespun linen. Larger towels, one was informed, could be got in the shape of bed-sheets, but for these the heavy charge of a penny was made. I still remember the look of astonishment when I insisted on having a towel to stand on *and* a sheet to dry myself with! Such wastefulness was then unheard of in dear primitive old Dux!

Up the Zemmgrund, which is, alas! no longer the secluded glen it used to be, one meets in the summertime regular processions of tourists, mostly Prussians, wending their way to one of those elevated Alpine Club huts—in this case the Berliner Hütte—which are but one step removed from the regular Alpine hotel, which is sure to follow as travel increases. It is a beautiful spot, but, as an old Tyroler once told me, it should be visited in the off season, when the rocks don't give back the Berliners' strident voices, and the glacier paths are not black with visitors hailing from the Spree. The Tyroler's love for the fault-finding type of Prussian is of a negative sort, and the visitors' high-pitched voices grate sadly on an ear that loves melodious sounds. I have personally no quarrel with these critics from North Germany, but at the same time I do think that, if there is nothing too bad to be said of the primitiveness, slowness, and stupidity of

the Tyrolese, it is surprising why such numbers of scolds can find pleasure in visiting the place annually. I am sure most of the Tyrolers would in their heart echo the drawling comment I once heard a Western citizen address to a critical New York dandy, whose remarks about the Western "city" were not flattering: "Why, stranger, there ain't anybody in this ere town that is holding you by the coat-tails."

Those who desire to see what fine chamois ground is like have every chance of inspecting one of the best preserves in the whole of the Alps, that of Prince Auersperg, which in extent and head of game is beaten by none. A walk of three or four hours from Maierhofen up the Stillup or Floiten glens, which latter branches off from the Zemmgrund, will take one to the portals of a glorious region given over entirely to the game that is so dear to every Tyrolese. Dotted about in the barren corries on spots that often seem inaccessible to any but expert climbers, and certainly not easy of approach for house-building purposes, there are small chalet-like buildings, the little lodges where the Prince and his guests lodge during the week he generally stays in each of these glens. Between Sundays on these occasions over 200 chamois are generally bagged, the game being driven to the guns by eighty or ninety beaters, all expert mountaineers, who have to make terrific rounds to gain the wind of the wary game. In November the Prince comes again to stalk the bucks during the rut or mating season. As there is generally deep snow on the slopes by that

time, the sport is often a somewhat arduous one, fit only for young legs.

More than ten years ago the Prince leased to a friend of mine a bit of outlying forest, some 30,000 or 40,000 acres in extent. At the time it contained a very moderate head of game, but by dint of careful nursing, and only shooting a few head at first, it has increased to such an extent that at present quite a hundred chamois can be killed there annually. This shows what can be done by careful handling. To-day chamois are so plentiful, that last November (1907) the lessee was able to win a bet that a chamois buck could be killed there within forty-eight hours after leaving London. The buck was killed, as a matter of fact, within forty-five hours!

A year or two ago, favoured by a streak of exceptionally good luck, I was able to pull off in this preserve a bit of quick shooting of somewhat unusual character. At any rate, none of my previous experiences, covering some forty odd years of mountain game shooting, with a bag of nearly 500 chamois, have enabled me to kill five chamois in such quick succession that at one and the same moment there were three dead chamois literally in the air. It occurred this way. After a chamois drive, five beasts had taken refuge on a narrow ledge close to the top of an immense precipice many hundreds of feet in height. Escape was impossible, and they would infallibly have starved to death there. To prevent this they had to be shot, and, as the other guns had already left, I

was asked to do it. I was standing at the bottom of the huge cliff a trifle back, so that I had a clear view of the animals, who were moving to and fro on the giddy ledge at fairly long range from where I was posted. With my Mannlicher-Schoenauer repeater I had them down without having to replenish the five-shot magazine, three of the beasts being actually tumbling down that tremendous precipice at the same moment. Bloodthirsty as it sounds, it had to be done, or their fate would have been an even worse one. The carcasses, smashed to a pulp, were, much to the delight of the crowd of beaters and keepers who witnessed the incident, handed over to them, and presently filled pots in which venison was not often cooked.

CHAPTER IV

SCHWAZ, HALL, AND THE SHRINE AT ABSAM

But we must get back to our train, wending its way up the Unter Innthal, or we shall never reach Innsbruck, the country's capital; all the more so as we shall have to make another lengthy stop at Schwaz, the very next place at which our by no means fast train comes to a halt. Before we reach it we see on our right, perched on the side of a steeply-rising mountain, 200 or 300 feet above the level valley, on which are dotted about prosperous-looking peasants' houses, a fine old castle, whose numerous windows glitter in the setting sun. It is Tratzberg, one of the show-places of Tyrol, which to visit we should have left the train at Jenbach, and driven up to it—a matter of half an hour or so.

Tratzberg has a romantic story; and though nothing of the original building remains to show how it looked in the fourteenth century, when it was pawned to one of the Frundsbergs by Pocket Mouth Meg, as was nicknamed the ungainly Duchess Margaret of Tyrol, it represents, as we see it to-day, the refined taste of the

concluding years of the following century. For it was in the years 1499-1500 that the Täntzl (wealthy mine-owners of Schwaz), ennobled by Emperor Maximilian, finished rebuilding the castle in a manner worthy of receiving the imperial sportsman as a frequent guest in its walls. Two rooms, whose panelling four centuries have darkened, but which are to-day in much the same condition in which they were when Maximilian occupied them at the time that Columbus was returning from his little jaunt of discovery to Western lands, are priceless jewels. And there are other equally unique architectural details and furnishings in the spacious chambers of this delightful building well worth breaking one's journey to see.* In the same century Tratzberg shared the kindly fate that befell Matzen by becoming the property of the great Fuggers, who added much to the internal adornments. One of the principal rooms, which is still known as the Fugger Zimmer, with a charming deeply recessed bow-window, from which a glorious view is obtainable, and a secret stairs by which the grounds below could be gained in case of desperate need, are in the same conditions as they were when the greatest financial magnates the world knew held in it their feasts, and bowed their welcome to arch-ducal guests, for Tratzberg was often visited by the Sovereigns of the country. To-day it is the property of the Counts Enzenberg, who allow visitors to inspect the chief rooms.

* I have given an account of its interesting history and many views of its interior in my *Land in the Mountains.*

BRIXEN

And now on to Schwaz, that quaintest of old towns in the Unter Innthal.

The 700 or 800 solid-looking old houses of which it consists to-day are but a remnant of the place in the heyday of its prime in the first half of the sixteenth century, when it was the largest and richest mining town in Europe. Its silver-mines were known already to the Romans, a fortified *castrum* probably occupying in the days of Cæsar the hill overlooking the great military highroad leading from Italy over the Brenner to Noricum. For many centuries after the fall of the Empire the mines lay idle, and their very existence had been entirely forgotten when, about the year 1409, they were rediscovered in a manner which reminds one of the romantic tales so often heard in the mining camps of Western America, though as a rule the good fortune out there befalls male and not female "prospectors." In the year before mentioned one lowly farm lass, named Gertrude Kandlerin, while watching a lively bull in her herd tearing up the ground with his horns, observed that he had laid bare a vein of shining ore. Only then was it discovered that those long-forgotten Roman miners had been digging and sinking shafts, in some of which their tools, evidently left behind in a hurry, were found.

The rediscovery of these precious deposits of high-grade grey copper laid the foundation of Schwaz's greatness, the employment of some 30,000 miners, and the making of a dozen medieval "silver kings," whose fortunes were for those days quite as phenomenal as

the enormous wealth poured into the pockets of the millionaires by the mines of Leadville, Virginia City, and Butte.

The output from some of the forty-four silver-mines worked within the radius of a few miles of Schwaz was the largest obtained up to then in Europe. Thus, from the Falkenstein mine, between the years 1523 and 1564, 2,058,501 marks of silver and 1,000,000 hundredweights of pure copper were gained, representing, according to present values, between £10,000,000 and £15,000,000 sterling. The 30,000 miners employed in this historical old mining-camp enjoyed a great reputation, and were sought, not only by all the mine-owners of Europe, but also by the military authorities, to direct sapper work. Thus, when Vienna was beleaguered by the Turks in 1529, men from Schwaz were called to make counter-mines, and destroy the trenches of the besiegers, a duty which they fulfilled with such good results that it led the Turks to give up the siege. Their technical knowledge was also, for those days, very considerable, and caused mining disputes arising in other parts of Europe to be referred to a board of experts sitting in Schwaz.

Money was naturally extremely abundant in those good days, and while the conflagrations, inundations, earthquakes, sieges, and sackings, which have befallen the town during the last 350 years, have destroyed most of the buildings, palaces, and other outward signs of unusual affluence, history has preserved some accounts of the prodigality which reigned in those days among

the lusty miners of Schwaz, and the luxury which marked the life of their employers. Among these latter there were the Rothschilds and Astors of the age—*i.e.*, the Fuggers and Fiegers, both historical names ; for who has not heard of the wonderful rise of the Augsburg burgher family of Fugger to the rank of Princes of the Holy Roman Empire, and of the story told of one Anton of that ilk, who, to gain the Emperor's favour, burnt the latter's I.O.U. for half a million gold florins on a fire of rare Eastern spicewood when the Emperor honoured him with a visit to his palace? This story recent researches in the Fugger archives have shown to be without foundation. When one Hanns Fieger, owner of Castle Matzen, brought his bride home mounted, 4,000 miners escorted the couple, and the thirty-two horses which drew the carriages are said to have been shod with shoes of solid silver. A thousand barrels of wine were emptied on that same occasion. For many years the annual income which the Fuggers drew from the Falkenstein mine exceeded 200,000 gold florins, which, taking the changed relations of values into consideration, would correspond now to a sum at least eight times as great. Numerous castles, some still intact, some mere ruins, dotting the prominent points in the surrounding country, were either built anew by the prosperous mine-owners, or historical old *Schlösser*, such as Tratzberg and Matzen, were restored and sumptuously fitted up. From the window at which the writer is penning these lines at least half a dozen can be seen, one and all telling a sad story of

departed splendour, for the hand of time and the hand of man have rested alike heavily upon all of them.

One of the few relics of those days which has escaped total ruin is the stately parish church in Schwaz, a Gothic building of noble dimensions and of rare architectural beauty, which was commenced in 1470. It is roofed with some 15,000 plates of copper containing a considerable admixture of silver, which the miners presented to the church. Several of the nine altars the church contains were dedicated exclusively to the use of the miners, who of course formed a prominent part of the population of Schwaz. Most of the pious votive offerings, such as the representative pick and shovel, or crossed miners' hammers, made of solid silver, which once adorned these altars, have long disappeared, but the lumps of rich ore walled into the sides of the church or over the house doors of the older buildings in the town betoken the history of the place. The great bell, which even in Tyrol, where deep-toned *Glocken* are the rule, has an unrivalled beauty of tone, was cast by the master-hand of Löffler (1503), and the miners vied with each other in their offerings of silver and copper, whereof it is mainly composed.

When Schwaz was at the zenith of its glory, the great religious upheaval of the Reformation in Northern Germany was laying the seeds of war and strife. Many of the Schwaz miners hailed from Saxony, the cradle of the movement, while others, again, having lived in various mining regions of Europe, had imbibed

the doctrines of the new religion, so that Schwaz soon became in the eyes of the Roman Catholics the "hotbed of the devilish creed." The miners carried things with a high hand; at one time they had possession of half of the parish church, and, in spite of excommunication, services in the new belief were held there—an instance which is probably without a parallel in the history of those disturbed times. From bad it went to worse; open rebellion and sanguinary conflicts with the population and the authorities of the country became the order of the day, and for several decades the industry which had poured such wealth into the pockets of those engaged in it languished. The great smelting works which had arisen round Schwaz, and which were famed for the scientific manner in which the ore was treated, stood unused, the ore "pockets" became less frequent, and the deeper levels filled with water, which subsequent generations found it impossible, with the primitive pumps known in those days, to conquer. A great plague and an earthquake in the following century completed the disasters that had overwhelmed the mines, while the Napoleonic wars of the beginning of the last century, in which Schwaz, with the exception of the venerable church which was saved (according to the pious peasants, by the direct intervention of God), was sacked and burned down.

As one wanders through the quaint streets overlooked by the picturesque bow-window-like *Erckers*, it is not hard to picture to oneself the life and bustle

that once reigned there. It is a very quiet town now, for the railroad passing near the town has deprived it, as it did Rattenberg, of its last old-established business, that of a post-town on the great commercial highroad between Italy and Germany.

Perched on the top of a cone-shaped hill 300 or 400 feet over the town, we observe a square tower with a smaller building—a chapel—reaching half-way up its grey walls. It is all that is left of the ancient stronghold of Castle Frundsberg, the foundation-stones of which were probably laid in Cæsar's time. In the tenth century already the Knights of Frundsberg appear as powerful as well as pious vassals of the Andechs dynasty, then the rulers of this part of Tyrol.

As we clamber up the steep ladder-like stairs leading to the top of the old keep to enjoy the superb sunset view obtainable from that elevated point, and peer out of the loopholes that show the enormous thickness of the walls, the fine old bell of Schwaz, far down below us, rings for vespers.

Opposite Schwaz a big square building attracts one's attention. It is the Monastery of Fiecht, rebuilt in an unfortunately inartistic manner after a great conflagration forty years ago. Its origin is very ancient, and the building has really no business where it stands, for the original foundation had its site in a narrow glen two miles farther up the mountain; but the position was so lonely that the Order, with its chapter-house, was removed to the main valley. The original monastic cell was built on an isolated rock in this

secluded glen, and there it stands to this day, a few of the monks being left there to take care of the buildings. St. Georgenberg, as it was called, was founded in the tenth century, the oft-mentioned Frundsbergers being among the earliest nobles mentioned in its domesday book. From some kinsmen of them, who felt the need of expiating long careers of violence, the monks received in the first quarter of the twelfth century a big piece of the adjoining country as an expiatory offering. Part of this estate comprised the Achen See, a fine alpine lake to which a mountain railway from Jenbach has been constructed. The present Abbot is what an American would call a very live man of business, a somewhat uncommon quality among heads of sacred Orders. By his own initiative he caused lake steamers to be built to ply the lovely Achen lake, and he built a number of hotels on its shores ; in fact, he has managed to get control of the entire tourist business in this delectable spot, making a very good thing out of this ancient votive offering.

On leaving Schwaz, Hall is the next place at which we must make a stop. Its name indicates that salt had something to do with its origin, and inasmuch as that commodity has been for upwards of 2,000 years its staple, it having been dug there in pre-Roman times, the name is certainly quite justified. To-day only a limited number of Hall's 6,000 inhabitants have any connexion with the mines, which are situated some five or six miles away on the Salzberg. Huge chambers

are excavated in the bowels of the mountain, and into these water is pumped, which is left there till it becomes brine. It is taken in pipes down to the boiling-pans, which are situated in the town near the station, so as to be handy to the railway that supplies the immense quantities of firewood required for the evaporating process. Salt being a State monopoly, the Government derives a big income from this source. In old days the boiling-pans were nearer to the mines at Thaur ; they were removed to their present site in 1305.

The quaint tower close to the station is a relic of the days when the Schwazer silver-mines were pouring out their untold riches ; here their produce was turned into coin, and it became the principal mint of Tyrol, an honour which, up to the fifteenth century, had belonged to Meran. Here Andreas Hofer, when he was acting as Regent of Tyrol, had his famous *Zwanzigers* minted. In Hall there was once a celebrated convent, to which a number of Archduchesses and other royal ladies retired at different periods, and as a consequence it contained some very choice articles *de vertu*—fine old silver, priceless lace and gorgeous Church vestments, so stiff with gold embroidery that the chasubles would stand on the ground without any support, as well as other sacred ornaments of the finest workmanship which these great ladies had presented to the cloister. To-day there is almost nothing left of these treasures ; if you want to see them, certain celebrated foreign art collections have to be visited. One

of the last treasures—an ebony, silver-inlaid altar—was secured not so many years ago by one of the Rothschilds. An inspection of the fine old building makes one regret more than ever the wholesale despoilment of Tyrol, and wish some of the relics of its finest art period were left.

Hall had its share of vicissitudes, conflagrations, earthquakes, and fearful pestilences, and it also saw a lot of fighting in its day, the last occasion being when the heroic Speckbacher in 1809, at the head of untrained peasants, succeeded three times in storming the bridge over the Inn at Hall, the key to the French and Bavarian positions. In the long-passed days of incessant wars between the Tyrolese Dukes and the Bavarians, Hall was generally the point which the latter tried to reach by quick marches and surprises, the many paths over the mountains separating the two countries being particularly favourable for filibustering forays. If successful, the salt-works were the first to be destroyed, for this meant distressing financial losses to the Tyrolese, salt being the most valuable product of the country.

Above Hall, towards the Salzberg, lies Absam, which is a celebrated shrine whence thousands of peasants make pilgrimages. Absam and the shrine at Eben, near Jenbach, where lies buried a very holy young maiden, St. Nothburga, a damsel of unusually spotless character, enjoy great popularity among couples whose marriage has remained unblessed with issue. Hence, at these two shrines, where prayer is believed

to propitiate the Deity, hundreds of miniature waxen effigies of babies in swaddling-clothes adorn the altars.

Saints play a great rôle in the life of the Tyrolese peasant. He does not reckon time by the day and month, as we do, but speaks of a certain day by the name of the saint to whom it is dedicated in the Roman Catholic almanack, or by the Church feast ordained for that day. While we can paraphrase in this way some ten or twelve days only out of the 365—*i.e.*, Candlemas, Lady Day, Michaelmas, Easter, etc.—our peasant friend, good Catholic as he is, knows every one of his 365 days by its distinctive saint's name ; indeed, in the remoter parts the older generations, in whose youth schooling was less rigorously enforced, would not know what you meant by the 1st of July or 31st of August, until the much-thumbed calendar, perhaps ten years old, could be consulted. "Oh, you mean St. Theobald's Day," or "St. Raimund's Day," as the case might be. According to that somewhat bulky *Who's Who* of Saints and Martyrs, the *Acta Sanctorum*, which contains in some sixty big volumes the biographies of over 17,000 saints, there was no difficulty in supplying the required names, and from these, again, to pick out the "Fourteen Succourers."

Effigies and pictures of saints surround the peasant everywhere in his domesticity, making the term "household gods" more than a figure of speech, and he knows to whom to turn in every misfortune or accident. The

three elementary disasters he most fears are fire, water in the shape of overwhelming freshets in the rushing mountain torrent close to his house, and the ravages committed by lightning and hail-storms. Against the first-named disaster the good offices of St. Florian are besought. His picture, representing a bold knight belted and behelmeted, is either nailed to the wall in the living-room, or it is painted in fresco on the outside of the house ; or his effigy, carved in wood, and nicely gilt and painted, holding the ever-present pail of water in his right hand, surmounts the well in front of the homestead. St. Nepomuk, the martyr who was cast into the river from the Prague bridge a good many hundred years ago, is the patron whose intercession with the Deity has to be invoked in case of danger arising from water, while St. Christopher possesses a variegated protectorship ; sudden death, the perils of travel, and, lastly, also the terrors of lightning and hail, can all be averted by prayer to him. One of the most frequently seen sacred pictures is that of this saint, who is represented as a giant with a child on his shoulders, in the act of wading across a stream. The child is the Christ Child, who, so the legend has it, one day appeared in disguise before St. Christopher while he was engaged in fulfilling his penance, which was to carry pilgrims over a deep river. Suddenly, while St. Christopher was carrying the Child across the stream, it grew heavier and heavier, till he sheer broke down with its weight. When at last the opposite shore was gained, Christ said, " Marvel not,

for with Me thou hast carried the sins of the world ;" and with that the saint's penance was accomplished.

For the preservation of his cattle, horses, and pigs, our peasant has special saints, whose reputation, however, varies in different localities. Thus, St. Leonhard enjoys throughout the northern valleys of Tyrol great renown for keeping horses in health and preventing fatal terminations of the various diseases to which they are subject. Hundreds of little waxen horses adorn the altars of all churches and chapels dedicated to this saint, while formerly rows upon rows of horseshoes were to be seen nailed to the church doors, betokening how often his intercession had been successfully invoked ; but of late years this has been stopped, and the votive offerings take the shape of curiously caparisoned stiff-legged miniature steeds made of red or white wax. In South Tyrol, on the other hand, St. Martin, the patron saint of innkeepers and publicans, and St. Wendelin, share in different districts the honour of being the special protector of cattle. In a village called Mais, near Meran, there was to be seen until quite lately, written underneath the picture of St. Wendelin on the altar in the village church, the words: "Saint Wendelin, thou great patron saint of all beasts, we beseech thee to pray for us poor Maisers." An equally typical story of the naive belief in their particular choice is narrated by Ludwig von Hörmann, author of delightful stories of Tyrolese peasant life. On Good Friday the body of the Redeemer, carved in wood, is carried in solemn procession from church to church,

KLAUSEN AND SABEN

and on one of these occasions a peasant from a particularly remote glen, visiting Meran for the first time, witnessed this ceremony without knowing its meaning. On demanding an explanation from a passer-by, he was asked whether he did not know that this was the day on which our Saviour died. "Ah," replied the naive little peasant man, "now that He is dead, they'll surely raise St. Martin to the position of God; and it will be a good thing, for he at least understands all about cattle."

St. Antonius the Abbot—the latter word is required to distinguish this martyr from another St. Antonius, the one who hailed from Padua, whose intercession is sought by young persons when in love troubles—enjoys a widespread reputation all over Tyrol as the protector of the homely pig. In the Italian-speaking parts he is, in fact, called straight out *Antonius del Porco.* As cattle, while on their elevated summer pasturages, are subject to many dangers in the shape of yawning precipices down which they might, and do, tumble, or fall victims to the terrific thunderstorms so common at these heights—when often a number of them, taking shelter under a tree, are killed by one bolt—special saints for these occasions are on the roster. These are St. Laurentius and St. Bartholomew, while St. Magnus is sure to help when field crops are in danger of destruction by plagues of mice, grasshoppers, or caterpillars or other grubs. St. Urban lords it over the vineyards of South Tyrol, so much so that his life-size effigy seated on a throne is carried in solemn procession

round the vineyards on the day of Corpus Christi, and the Masses held on his day, May 25, are attended by large crowds of those who have reason to invoke his blessing.

But we must not think that the saints are there only to minister to the wants of the peasants' kine and crops; a goodly number are at his beck and call when the ills of his own body require heavenly help. In this matter his choice is regulated on the principle that a martyr who reached saintly rank by virtue of his sufferings must be the most likely one to accord his help in the alleviation of like torture. Why should not the proverbial fellow-feeling make also a saint wondrous kind? For this good reason St. Barbara, who had all her teeth wrenched out of her jaws with red-hot pincers, is the one saint who responds to prayer from those suffering from toothache. St. Blasius, the Armenian Bishop-martyr, whose flesh was raked off his quivering body with an iron-spiked harrow till the cruel tool reached his throat—whither it could not penetrate because the patient was reciting holy words—is the saint to whom it is safe to turn in cases of throat diseases. Another saintly lady, who was parboiled in a cauldron of oil, dispenses relief in the case of scalds and burns. St. Rochus, whose nether limbs were beaten to a pulp, does the same in the case of injuries to the knee or leg; and what saint can possibly know more about wounds inflicted by sharp things than St. Sebastian, whose body was made a pincushion of with cruel arrows? St. Catherine, who was broken on the wheel;

St. Erasmus, who had his intestines reeled out of his living body; St. Euchatius, who was pitched off a height on to a bed of cruel thorns; St. Vitus, who was immersed in a kettle of boiling pitch; and even poor St. Dionysius, who walked about holding his own head in front of him—they one and all respond to the call of distressed humanity. Now and again persons are discovered to have turned to the wrong saint for help. Of this Hörmann narrates an instance. A woman was devoutly praying before the altar of St. Joseph. On leaving the church she was asked by an old crony what she was praying to him for. "My husband," she replied, "is so unkind to me that I thought I would ask St. Joseph, the model husband, to help me in my need." "Oh, you fool!" answered the more worldly-wise crony, "don't you know that for relief in that trouble you have to address yourself to St. Anne? the men always stick to each other."

From the church at Absam, as we look up the valley, leaving the densely-packed houses of Hall lying at one's feet, we perceive in the distance the steeples of Innsbruck. A primitive, lazy little narrow-gauge tramway, which from a financial point of view is more of a success than from the engineer's standpoint, covers by dint of hard puffing the five miles in something like half an hour. Should time be of no object, this alternative route, which for a great part of the distance runs parallel with the grown-up railway, can be used so as to see more of the approaches to picturesque Innsbruck.

CHAPTER V

INNSBRUCK AS IT WAS AND IS

About the "obvious," the usual guide-book information concerning the sights of the capital, the unique "Tomb" of Maximilian, which is really no tomb at all, but a cenotaph—for the great Emperor's body lies buried in Neustadt, near Vienna—ubt which monument is nevertheless of singular interest, and, in its way, without a rival in the world; of the palace popularly ascribed to Frederick with the Empty Purse, the ducal protector of the peasantry, a miniature palace, the bow-window of which he covered with a golden roof;* of the Museum; the neighbouring castle of Ambras; and the great mountains that peep over the tall houses into Innsbruck's streets—about all these sights the first *Führer* that comes to hand will give the particulars in a far more concise form than would be in place in these pages. And even the expense of purchasing a guide-book is spared to the traveller, for the go-ahead hotel-keepers of Innsbruck have got up a

* The tiles, which are still in place, are of copper, heavily gilt. The bow-window is seen in the centre of our picture.

charming little illustrated guide of the town which they present gratis to their visitors, an example mine hosts in larger towns might well copy.

Innsbruck's future is assuredly a bright one, for two great channels of the world's travel cross here—the Berlin–Rome and the Paris–Vienna–Constantinople routes. Its position on a wide plain surrounded on all sides by sheltering peaks, with the silver band of the Inn winding along the green and extremely fertile valley, is one of the most picturesque in Europe; indeed, there are many globe-trotters who give it the palm. Its drawbacks, as that happy type of traveller who goes about Europe with the only object of cataloguing the faults and demerits of places which he honours with his visits will tell you, are that it is hot in summer, and that the stillness of the air that usually reigns there is occasionally broken by spells of hot winds that whirl the dust about in the streets. As to the first defect, it depends, of course, upon where you were last. If you come from Italy or South Tyrol, no heat that Innsbruck can sample will be found uncomfortable; but if you come straight out from England or from some cool mountain resort, the heat in July and August is no doubt oppressive. But an easy escape from heat and dust is conveniently at hand in the shape of a mountain tramway, which takes one in a short time to Igls. This is a pretty and breezy summer resort, with several good hotels, the Igler Hof being the leading one, and patronized by British and German royalties, lying on a mountain

plateau nearly 1,000 feet over the town. Houses and chalets, many of which show artistic architecture, dot the wide sweep of beautiful meadows, or nestle in the fringe of dark pine-woods that come down close to the very backdoors of the main street. There is also a small lake where good bathing can be enjoyed in the hot weather, a spot, in fact, where, if it lay in Switzerland, would be found a delectable opening for a winter as well as a summer resort; for Igls possesses some of the natural possibilities nowadays sought by people visiting the mountain regions in winter. Happily it lies in Tyrol, and hence is still "undiscovered" in the Swiss sense of the word.

There are a number of similarly delightfully situated villages on the *Mittel Gebirg*, or foothills round Innsbruck, each of which is made the summer home by hundreds of Innsbruckers and other townsfolk, though in none of them can such good hotel accommodation be found as in Igls. On the other hand, life in the other villages is much simpler, and prices very much lower, one's fellow-visitors being almost exclusively Austrians.

A very pretty view of Innsbruck can be obtained from the opposite side of the valley, the south face, from the Hungerburg, occupying a wooded plateau almost as high over the town as Igls. At present this spot, to which an electric mountain railway (Telpher system) takes one in about ten minutes, is in a state of creation, a large restaurant, the invariable goal of all such-like excursions, being the only building com-

pleted. It appears to be doing a thriving business, its principal clientele being Innsbruckers; for, like all good Teutons, a view looked at through a beerglass possesses in their eyes more attractions than one where the latter is unobtainable. As a winter mountain resort of low altitude, Innsbruck has an almost unrivalled position, the tobogganing, or *Rodeln*, as it is called in Tyrol, and the ski ground, being as varied as it is good; while the genial hospitality no less than the first-class cuisine of the Hôtel Tyrol, makes the stay there comfortable and pleasant.

Another charming excursion, also by means of a little electric mountain railway, is a visit to the Stubai Valley, which ends at the foot of a grand collection of glaciers and peaks known collectively by the same name. The present terminus of the little line is Fulpmes, which is the principal village in the valley, and which you reach in an hour. About three miles further towards the foot of the glaciers lies Neustift, the last settlement in the glen (3,240 feet). Our view gives a good idea of the place.

As a centre for winter sport, Innsbruck holds out certain inducements that are absent from almost all other places. One is that, being a fairly large town, one is able on off days, when neither sleighing (tobogganing) nor ski-ing is possible, or one wants a day or two of rest, to occupy oneself with skating, sightseeing, concerts, or social amusements, such as military dances and fancy-dress balls. These latter amusements terminate, however, with the beginning

of Lent. There is a capital skating-rink, where a military band often plays, several toboggan-runs from Igls, Mutters, and one of four kilometres down the Salzberg, near Hall. The last-named lands you near the starting-point of the steam-tram to Innsbruck, of which I have already had occasion to speak. Finally, there are some fine ski-runs, notably one on the Patcher Kofel, which rises some 5,000 feet above the town. Half an hour in the Brenner train to Matrei, where the Waldrastjoch can be ascended, and a long run of more than five miles, with a drop of 3,500 feet over excellent ski country, lands one at the railway within ten minutes of Innsbruck. An enjoyable toboggan-run is from the hay-barns above Ober Perfuss, which can be reached in an hour or an hour and a half's walk from the station of Unter Perfuss. These rural runs make one acquainted with little mountain villages which, in spite of being half buried in snow, still look warm and snug in the brilliant sunshine, and take one through delightful stretches of silent forests, where every stem is a glittering Christmas-tree-like apparition. They have about them all the charm of exploration, for, with the exception of a few natives, one meets on these expeditions hardly anybody, as they are unknown to the ruck from the hotels.

Innsbruck is not by any means one of the oldest places in Tyrol, for its existence as a *Markt*, or village, does not date further back than the last quarter of the twelfth century, when many other settlements along

the Brenner route had already reached far greater importance. The reason of this was that Wilten, now a modest suburb of Innsbruck, had up to then overshadowed what is now the capital. Wilten arose upon the most ancient of all Roman settlements in the Unter Innthal—*i.e.*, *Veldidena*—a fortified station erected, with the usual strategical foresight of Roman military leaders, at the very foot of the Brenner Pass, so as to command the only feasible approach to the pass. By the time the general chaos of the *Völkerwanderung* had subsided, and Christianity—introduced, by the way, by Irish monks—had taken firm root, Wilten first appears in history as the seat of a powerful monastic Order, the Priors of which, with few exceptions, seem to have been capable men who well knew how to secure authority and wealth. Against these domineering Church lords the citizens of the neighbouring village of Innsbruck had at first little chance of free action; but as the settlement grew, serious quarrels between the citizens and their ecclesiastical oppressors soon obliged the then Sovereign Lord of the Unter Innthal, Bertold of Andechs, at the solicitation of Bishop Henry of Brixen, in whose see Wilten and Innsbruck lay, to step in, and not only allay the dispute, but put matters on an equable basis. This was done in a solemn manner in A.D. 1180, most of the nobility of the Unter Innthal being present as witnesses, while some of the principal burghers of the settlement were called as spokesmen. The settlement arrived at on this occasion, and which included an attempt to curtail

the numerous privileges claimed by the monastery—amongst them the right to the chase and to the fisheries throughout the whole district—did not last very long. Fresh disputes arose, and eight years later the overlord had again to appear on the scene and allay the burghers' wrath. Presently, as Innsbruck grew, soon attaining the dignity of a city (1232), it was found advisable to fortify the town, not only on account of the Bavarian raids, which were one of the consequences of the murder of Emperor Barbarossa's youngest son, King Philip, by Otto of Wittelsbach—the cause of one of the most violent political convulsions of medieval times—but also against the aggressions of the Abbots of Wilten. One of these, taking a leading hand in politics, as was the wont of the Church dignitaries in those days, was dealt with in no gentle manner by the Innsbruckers. Accused of traitorously favouring the Bavarians, armed citizens one dark night rushed the monastery, pulled the unfortunate Abbot out of his bed, and drowned him in the Sill, flowing past the monastery's back-door. From that time on Innsbruck had peace, and Wilten, as I have already said, is now glad to be included within the capital, so as to benefit by the many metropolitan improvements which mark Innsbruck as an up-to-date modern town.

In the middle of the fifteenth century there seem to have been some curious goings-on in the sacred halls of the monastery at Wilten, where two famous political characters of the day came into contact with each other

DURRENSEE AND MTE CRISTALLO.

in more senses than one. They were Duke Sigismund of Tyrol, husband of Eleanor of Scotland (James I.'s daughter), and one of the most formidable representatives of the Church militant, Cardinal Cusa, Bishop of Brixen. The Duke's Court was one of the gayest at that time in Europe, so much so that the Government of the day was compelled, in order to meet the numerous claims raised by the illegitimate offspring of the pleasure-loving Sovereign, to settle once for all that each of his forty sons was to receive no more than 1,000 florins, a suit of armour, and a horse; while the girls were to be satisfied with the above-mentioned sum of money as a dowry. Between the gallant Sigismund and the domineering Cardinal there had arisen a fierce dispute anent a fief which the Cardinal claimed from the knights of Frundsberg, powerful vassals of Sigismund and owners of many strong places—amongst them also Castle Matzen. Before the fierce feud between the Duke and the Cardinal began, in the course of which a great deal of blood was spilt, the two disputants attempted to arrive if possible at a compromise. The rich monastery of Wilten was the place where this meeting occurred, but the conference seems to have ended in a somewhat rowdy fracas; for, according to the Cardinal's report to Rome, the Duke's men-at-arms "sorely pressed his sacred person," the end being that Duke Sigismund "fell down the stairs and somewhat injured his shoulder and back"; in other words, the country's secular ruler seems to have been ignominiously ejected

from the monastery. A temporary truce was, however, patched up between the two, and five days later, when the Cardinal was preaching in Innsbruck, the Duke and his whole Court attended the church. What exactly happened or what was said from the pulpit is not known, only that the Duke, angered beyond endurance by the Cardinal's probably rather pointed remarks, suddenly rose, and, followed by his Court, stalked out of the church, the clanking of the swords and of the heavy plate armour making a sore disturbance and interrupting the service. After that it seemed impossible to avert hostilities, but the impossible was attempted, Sigismund's clever and immensely popular Scotch Duchess acting as go-between, but the negotiations proved abortive and hostilities commenced.

At Wilten all the important travellers, the Emperors, Kings, Popes, and great generals, who either visited the Innsbruck Court or who were merely passing through, were entertained right royally, the Abbot's palace being a far roomier and grander edifice than the Duke's *Burg* in the dark little streets of Innsbruck, where the houses were huddled together within the narrow confines of the town walls. And at Wilten most of the notable travellers, after leaving Innsbruck and about to commence their weary horseback ascent of the Brenner, dismounted from their steeds to receive the Abbot's blessing, or, if they had just accomplished the arduous journey, to offer up thanksgivings in the Wilten church.

What strain upon the posting resources these

journeys of royalty imposed upon the country the chroniclers of the time often betray. Thus, when the consort of Emperor Charles VI. was passing through Tyrol on her way from Barcelona to Vienna, there had to be in readiness at each posting-station five hundred carriage and sixty riding horses!

When Archduke Ferdinand, the founder of the Ambras collection, the finest in the world at that time, gave one of his famous shooting-match fêtes, numerous princely guests arrived to participate, and we hear of the Duke Albrecht of Bavaria journeying to Innsbruck with a suite of 416 persons and 580 horses; the Duke of Ferrara, the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, and other magnates, arriving with similar trains of followers. Royal travellers were invariably attended by very numerous suites, even if they were not of the first rank. Thus, when Queen Christina of Sweden started on her well-known journey to Rome—she forswore her religion in Innsbruck—her suite consisted of 255 persons!

Even in those days late hours that remind one of the "Wagner Ring" were no exception at operas. When the last-named versatile potentate was feasted by the Court at Innsbruck, the opera *L'Argia* was given, the performance lasting from nine o'clock in the evening until 2.30 a.m.

On most occasions these royal travellers journeyed in a very leisurely manner, tarrying in the towns for days, if not for weeks; but sometimes even the most august voyagers exhibited an astonishing amount of

endurance. Thus, we read in the Chronik of Innsbruck that when the venerable Pope Pius VI., on his return journey to Rome, passed Innsbruck, he arrived on horseback at a quarter to ten at night, repairing immediately to the festively illuminated parish church, where the assembled priesthood kissed hands. It was long after midnight before he could sit down to his supper. Next morning he read Mass at half-past five, and at eight o'clock gave his general blessing from the balcony of the palace, and immediately afterwards he resumed his journey over the still snowy Brenner !

The tradespeople of Innsbruck must have been a hard-headed lot, to judge by some of the incidents chronicled by contemporaries, and they evidently showed no weak-kneed snobbishness in enforcing claims even against their Sovereigns. Two instances will suffice to show this. When the light-hearted Henry, King of Bohemia and Duke of Tyrol, on one of his progresses through the country, outran the constable and wanted to ride off without settling his debts, amongst which was Master Eberhard's little reckoning for fish and wine supplied by him to the Court at Innsbruck, the sturdy fishmonger dared to place his person in the way of the King's horse, holding aloft the undischarged bill ; and the good-natured King, instead of ordering one of his men-at-arms to spit the bold creature on his halberd, or to make mincemeat of his carcase, actually got off his horse and there and then acquitted himself of his debt by securing the amount of the debt, 21 marks of silver, on the

revenue of the Innsbruck customs, a transaction by no means unusual in those cash-less days when, in the finances of even the best-regulated country, the lack of coined money was an ever-present evil. What this amounted to in the case of a spendthrift ruler, such as "good King Henry," it is nowadays difficult to imagine. The fact that, when this monarch a few years before (1314) granted the first charter for a money-lender's and pawnbroking business in Tyrol, he permitted the lucky Florentine Jew Bartolomæ to charge a rate of interest which works out at $86\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. per annum, illustrates the scarcity of ready money at the time.

Two centuries later the Innsbruck traders—this time it was some innkeepers—had again occasion to assert themselves, the result being a peculiarly unfortunate one. Emperor Maximilian arrived in Innsbruck in the winter of 1518, and it appears that in consequence of some mistake, or of a dishonest official's peculations, some innkeepers' claims had been left unpaid. So one cold December night some of the Emperor's carriages and horses were left standing shelterless in the street. The ever open-handed Maximilian, who had done so much for the town in his long career, spreading wide the fame of its armourers, bronze-founders, glass-stainers, and other branches of the arts and crafts which he had taken under his special protection by summoning masters from all parts of the world, took this audacious as well as ungracious proceeding much to heart, and decided to leave Innsbruck forthwith and

to proceed on his journey to Vienna. He was a sick man when he left, a sharp attack of dysentery having weakened him, so that when the hardships of a wintry journey on an open barge down the Inn River brought on a fever, it found the aged monarch ill able to resist it, and he died on the voyage. From contemporary accounts, it appears that for the previous four years the formerly gay and lusty sportsman, hero of dozens of adventures and feats of strength, had been oppressed by forebodings of death, and always carried about with him wherever he went on his constant journeys a plain wooden coffin, "the only prince's palace," as he used to jest, "for which nobody envies me." It also formed part of the cargo of the barge that floated down the Inn River through the silent winter landscape with the heartsore Emperor, who was so soon to take up his last abode in his narrow palace.

Maximilian's grandson, Charles V., ruler of a yet vaster empire, comprising continents that were undiscovered when the former came to the throne, evinced a similarly morbid fancy to be surrounded by the trappings of death. He, too, travelled about Europe with a coffin as a never-absent piece of personal luggage. In fact, the only time that he was known to part company with it was on the occasion of his first attempted flight from Innsbruck. Charles V., on his way to the Council of Trent, had been taken ill with gout in Innsbruck, but the unexpected approach of the traitorous Maurice of Saxony's forces obliged him to seek safety in flight, for he was practi-

cally without any army at the time. So the mighty Cæsar, upon whose realm the sun did not set, had recourse to a theatrical *coup*, the like of which surely no head of the Holy Roman Empire ever before or ever afterwards assayed. Putting his favourite valet Dubois into the Imperial bed in the Innsbruck palace to impersonate his sacred self as sick man, he dressed himself up as an elderly lady travelling to take the waters at Wildbad. Thus disguised, seated in an ordinary waggon, he travelled towards the boundary. At a place called Lermos, near the Bavarian boundary, Charles ordered his single companion to cause some simple refreshments to be brought to him in his waggon. The buxom country lass who bore them to him, on catching sight of the traveller's face, exclaimed, "Oh, how like this old lady is to the great Emperor!" which so frightened the pusillanimous monarch that he forthwith returned to Innsbruck. From there, a few days later, as Maurice's troops were still advancing on Tyrol's capital without meeting serious resistance, Charles started on his more successful flight southward over the Brenner, notwithstanding that he was suffering at the time the torments of his disease. At half-past eight o'clock on a cold spring night, 1552, in a torrent or rain, which turned into snow as the dismal party reached higher altitudes, the ignominious flight from Innsbruck was commenced. Carried in a litter, surrounded by personal attendants who carried torches, there was borne behind him his coffin, followed by his brother Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and his erst-

while prisoner, the Elector of Saxony, who had with him his favourite, the famous painter Lucas Cranach. The Emperor's trusted banker, Anton Fugger, of whose family we have already had to speak, and who was undoubtedly the richest man in Europe, was likewise of the party ; while the rear of the train consisted of some 500 Netherland horsemen, who were kept busy destroying the bridges so as to retard pursuers.

What a picture of fallen human greatness that weird party must have presented as they wended their way on that stormy night, under the fitful glare of torches, through the dense pine-forest, squalls of sleet and snow sweeping down upon them in the narrow defiles ! The snow soon covered everything with a white mantle that made it difficult to tell the litter from the bier, to distinguish the conveyance of the living Emperor from that intended for the dead. History has provided few dramatic scenes containing such a mixture of the pathetic and the ludicrous element.

On another occasion a fair daughter of an Innsbruck burgher caused a dire quarrel between an Emperor and a Duke of Tyrol, which not only caused a deadly rupture between two royal chums, but changed the whole future of the country's ruler, and steeped his people in a fierce internecine war. It happened thus : Sigismund, the hot-headed King of the Hungarians, shortly before the meeting of the famous Council of Constance in 1414, in which the destinies of three claimants to the Imperial throne of Germany as well as

of three Popes were decided, came to Innsbruck to confer with his crony, Duke Frederick, the one with the empty purse. They both were notorious admirers of the fair sex, and their gallant adventures were as varied as they were peculiar, to give no stronger name to them. Frederick, anxious to do the honours to his guest in a worthy style, gave a splendid masquerade, to which, amongst many beautiful aristocratic women, a certain fair damsel of the town, daughter of an influential citizen, was asked. Both host and guest were men of about the same commanding stature, and both wore long beards, according to the fashion of the time. How it happened exactly is not divulged by Windeck, King Sigismund's Secretary, the narrator of the story ; but, anyhow, violence was done to the young Innsbruckerin at a late hour of the night, the identity of the masked assailant being indicated only by the long beard. The affair made a great stir in the town, and, as it became known that none else than the King or the Duke could have been the culprit, these two Princes laid the blame at each other's door, each declaring that the other "Long Beard" had committed the outrage. In the end the two had a violent quarrel, and King Sigismund left in great wrath. When, a few months later, Duke Frederick made his famous journey to Constance, riding in the depth of winter over the snowed-up Arlberg Pass, arriving in Constance in January, 1415,* he found that the implacable hatred

* Frederick, unfortunately for himself, was backing the wrong horse when adhering to Pope John XXIII.

of Sigismund, who in the meantime had been chosen Emperor, put him and his party not only in the wrong, but, by actually placing an immense price on his head and causing the Church to pronounce the Great Ban over him, placed his life in imminent jeopardy. He had to fly from Constance, and his own brother, taking advantage of the fact, caused a rising in the country which laid low scores of proud castles and sent thousands of Tyrolese to their doom. But for that ill-fated Innsbruck quarrel, the two would have remained friends and the country would have been spared a cruel fraternal war.

CHAPTER VI

THROUGH THE UPPER INN VALLEY TO THE ARLBERG

BIDDING good-bye for the present to Innsbruck and the Unter Innthal, we will let the Staatsbahn (State Railway) take us up the Inn Valley and the Arlberg. It is the route which most English visitors to Tyrol, if they do not come by it, at least use for their return journey.

On our way up the valley we pass the once famous Cistercian monastery of Stams, where lie buried most of the medieval rulers of Tyrol, beginning with its founder, Duke Meinhard, and his spouse, Queen Elizabeth, of whose tragic sorrow we have already spoken, to Archduke Sigismund and his Scotch Duchess, Eleanor. When, some years ago, Count Wilczek received permission to examine the vault, and to get to it had to break up the stone pavement, it was found that all the coffins had been rifled, probably by the troops of Maurice of Saxony in 1552, who seem to have been the worst pillagers Tyrol knew since the days of the barbarians.

The next station at which our train draws up is Oetz, where we branch off to reach the most important of the Ober Innthal's side-valley, the Oetzthal. The road into this attractive mountain valley is rough, and as glacier-fed torrents come pouring down on either side, the usual aftermath in the shape of moraines, avalanches, and landslips become visible with increasing frequency as we penetrate into the mountains. No summer passes that the road does not need considerable repairs, often so considerable that carriage traffic is stopped altogether or has to take a circuitous route. By this valley we reach the heart of the central chain at a point where some of the finest peaks rear their heads heavenward, and vast expanses of snow and ice gladden the eye of the mountain-lover, for here at least we can see some of the noblest mountain scenery in its pristine condition. If the great peaks looming up over our heads are no longer virgin, few traces of their conquest make themselves manifest.

The three views of typical points in the Oetzthal—*i.e.*, of Längenfeld, one of the villages in the upper reaches of the valley, at an altitude of 3,820 feet; the yet higher Alpine settlement of Heilig Kreuz, lying some 1,500 feet higher, near timber-line; and, thirdly, Gurgl, the highest village in Tyrol, and one of the highest anywhere in the Alps—will bring this valley before the reader's eye. Gurgl is a poor little community, with eight months of winter and no month free of snow. It lies at an altitude of nearly 6,300 feet. Here one has to appeal to the hospitality of the village

MISURINASEE AND DREI ZINNEN.

priest for such simple accommodation as one can expect in so isolated a spot.

Some very fine glaciers and peaks surround the primitive little village, which in winter often almost disappears under its deep pall of snow, and is cut off for weeks from the outer world.

Much might be written about the Oetzthal and its sterling inhabitants, who differ in some respects from the gayer and song-loving Unter Innthal peasants ; for here Nature has a sterner aspect, and man in his fight for existence has to face a rougher climate, more sterile soil, and lives a more isolated life, so that it is no wonder that the hardships of his existence make him a more serious and silent fellow than his brother who hails from more favoured localities.

Getting back to our train at Oetz, we pursue our journey towards the Arlberg, passing Landeck, where the highroad, following the Inn River, branches off in a south-westerly direction towards Finstermünz and the Engadine.

After passing Landeck, the climb of the Arlberg commences. On our way to St. Anton, where the great tunnel is entered, we pass the entrances of several side-valleys, and at that of the Patznaun the railway takes a giant's leap over the V-shaped notch in the slopes along which we are travelling, many hundreds of feet over the floor of the main valley. By a single arch, nearly 400 feet in length, the Trisanna viaduct spans the gorge, with a torrent 250 feet below the frail-looking iron girders. As we emerge upon the giddy

spider bridge, we pass, placed in curious juxtaposition, a bit of old-world Tyrol. Standing on a pinnacle of rock scarcely a stone's-throw from the two iron rails that represent civilization and modernity, a queer old castle rears its dingy, and in many places crumbling, walls. It is the old ruin of Schloss Wiesberg, a small robber-knights' *Burg* built there some seven hundred years ago to command the highroad over the Arlberg, which, though of nothing like the same importance as the Brenner Pass, must nevertheless have yielded a promising enough harvest to the knights domiciled in this eerie old pile. From it they descended upon the unfortunate traders and travellers as they passed on their way to and from the Arlberg, taking toll according to a scale that depended upon the mood they happened to be in. If the goods were particularly tempting, the whole "caboodle" was simply confiscated, lock, stock, and barrel, the unfortunate owners being left to continue their journey on foot, glad to escape the worse fate of becoming inmates of the dungeons of Wiesberg, which, like those of Castle Klamm a little further down the valley, enjoyed an evil reputation. In the latter a mighty Church lord, the Abbot of Wilten, had once to take up a very unwelcome residence, being captured and held for a substantial ransom.

As our train rushes past the base of the old walls, one cannot help being struck with the ease with which a modern "hold up" of a train in the good Western style could be managed by a few cool hands.

Not long after passing the Trisanna bridge, the express reaches its height of land at St. Anton; for here, to avoid climbing some 1,600 feet to the top of the actual Arlberg Pass, one of the long Alpine tunnels, six and a half miles in length, pierces the great chain. St. Anton is a thriving little village overcrowded in summer, and, of late, also in winter by sport-loving visitors. Being situated in the bottom of a narrow valley, the mountain slopes shut it in sadly, and the passenger by rail has no chance of getting even the briefest glimpse of the lovely scenery that rewards the traveller by carriage or motor who keeps to the uniformly well-kept State highroad. It serpentines up the pass through open grassland and copses of pine and larch-woods, with glorious views opening here and there, until the actual watershed between the Danube and the Rhine is reached, at an altitude of 5,900 feet, at St. Christoph. In late springs the snow occasionally lies here long, and it was on the way down from here that the competitors—more particularly the leading ones—in the celebrated Paris-Vienna motor race met with some unusual experiences, for nobody expected to have to shovel snow in the beginning of June.

Some hundreds of feet above St. Anton a big new "double-season" hotel is to be built. It is a capital site for a first-class caravanserai, where in summer all the delights of a comfortable residence amid very lovely scenery, with a host of attractive walks, as well as chamois shooting and trout fishing can be enjoyed,

while in winter really first-class tobogganing, on slopes steep enough to please anybody, ski-ing over grand ground, and bob-sleighing down the broad incline of the highroad, can be enjoyed for certainly four months every year.

At the height of the pass the ancient hospice of St. Christoph marks not only the watershed, but also the boundary between Tyrol and Vorarlberg, which, although it belongs to Tyrol, has a separate little Government of its own, and in official language insists upon being mentioned separately from Tyrol. In the old days the hospice was a far more important place than it is now, for until 1824, when the present splendid *Reichs Strasse* over the pass was completed, only a mule-track led across this much-travelled traverse ; and as the hospice was the only place of refuge, it saved many lives, particularly in winter. It was founded in 1386 by a poor shepherd, who wandered all over Europe to collect funds for it, and this he accomplished by establishing a brotherhood. Already in 1414, when travel was particularly heavy, in connexion with the Council of Constance, four Dukes of Austria, twenty-nine Bishops and Abbots, and over 850 men of lesser degree, belonged to this order.

In the chapel of the hospice there is a huge figure of St. Christoph carved in wood, the sadly mutilated condition of which has been caused by a curious superstition. A splinter cut from the figure is believed to serve as safe cure for home-sickness, so in the course of centuries every Tyrolese starting out for foreign lands,

passing that way, whittled off a bit of St. Christoph and took it with him as a charm.*

Into Vorarlberg we do not propose to penetrate on this occasion, however inviting that attractive little country undoubtedly is, with its picturesque timber houses, industrious population, interesting towns, and sunny valleys as well as quaint costumes.

I have alluded several times to the excellent roads through Tyrol that attract automobilists to this part of the world. One point, however, motorists should not forget when penetrating into by-ways off the *Reichs Strasse.* It is that caution should be used in crossing wooden bridges. The side-roads are kept up by the villages, and not by the State, and as no greater weight than a hay-waggon passes over them, they are by no means always safe for a heavy car. Even for carriages these by-way bridges are occasionally dangerous, particularly if they are at the bottom of a hill and the coachman is careless enough to trot over them. In some cases, also, these primitive bridges span great depths ; one over which I passed in a heavy car, with my heart where it had no business to be, bridging a gulf 170 feet in depth. An unpleasant experience I had a few years ago may serve as a warning. I was driving out from our shooting-lodge in one of the side-

* In this respect St. Christoph shared the fate of another saint, viz., St. Briccius, at Heiligenblut. So eager were the pilgrims in former times to carry off splinters from the wooden effigy that adorned his grave that the figure had to be renewed every few years. To stop this it is now surrounded by a trellis-work guard.

valleys of the Ennsthal, a remote glen into which led at the time a bad road with primitive bridges which spanned the torrents one had to cross. One of these timber bridges, down to which there was a decline, crossed a gorge formed by the Solk River, usually a small stream with occasional deep pools, but just then swollen to a surging, rushing river by heavy rains. I was seated in a light vehicle for two people, the coachman sitting in front on the rudimentary seat with his feet resting on the pole. We had been rattling along the rutty road, and, instead of letting the horses walk over the bridge, he trotted across. On reaching the middle it suddenly gave way, one of the side-beams supporting the structure snapping off short. We were pitched into the muddy river below, a fall high enough to be serious had it not been for the unusual depth of water and rushing current. In falling I was thrown over the head of the coachman into a deep pool, and was held there under the water by the force of the current, my head being under a tree lying athwart the stream. How I got out of that tight place I don't know, but I did manage to extricate myself, and, curiously enough, reached the bank with my pipe still clenched between my teeth. The coachman, who was entangled in the harness close to the kicking horses, had also a close shave, but finally managed to reach the bank none the worse for the adventure; but it took nine woodcutters, who happened to be at work not very far off, four hours to get the horses and what remained of the carriage out of the water, everything that could float

off being washed away, of course, and lost. What made it a doubly lucky escape was that the evening before I had crossed this very bridge in a heavy closed carriage laden with six people, and it had stood the much greater strain. Nothing in the meanwhile could have occurred to weaken the cross-beam, for it was high above the water. As the river was even more swollen the evening before, we four persons inside the carriage—amongst them Mrs. Baillie of Dochfour and her boy—would have been drowned like rats in a trap. The beam upon which the bridge rested, on being examined, proved to be quite rotten, and I would never have believed, had I not seen it myself, that it could have withstood the weight of that heavy carriage.

CHAPTER VII

OVER THE BRENNER TO BRIXEN

RETURNING to Innsbruck after our little outing up the Ober Innthal and the Arlberg, it is perhaps as well to premise a few remarks regarding the pass by means of which we are about to cross the Alps and reach southern climes.

That it is the oldest as well as lowest traverse of the main chain every one knows, but only those who have travelled across it can realize that, unlike most other modern transalpine railways, the Brenner line climbs every foot of the ascent to the very top of the pass. On this route there is no great tunnel many miles in length, by which railways usually escape steep ascents. Here the hard-puffing giant locomotives—often there are two, and in the height of the season I have seen three to a train—have to pull up or push up their load every foot, until, at an altitude of about 4,600 feet, the watershed between the Adriatic and the Black Sea is gained at a station called after the pass.

For the traveller who wants to see as much as he can of the country through which he is passing, this

has, of course, the advantage of enabling him to do so from the windows of his carriage while the railway climbs upwards in stately curves, now and again dipping for brief minutes into short tunnels, but otherwise keeping in plain view the highroad, with its villages and straggling groups of peasants' crofts, and meadows.

The Brenner line was completed just too late for Austria's welfare, for the successes of the Empire's soldiers on the fields of Italy in the year 1866, when it was attacked in the north by Prussia and in the south by Italy, would have been gained more quickly, and would have enabled a speedier concentration of forces against the Northern foe, had the line been completed a few months earlier. The *Südbahn*, as the line from Kufstein to Verona, with the branch through the Pusterthal, is called, in distinction to the well-managed *Staatsbahn*, or State Railway, that runs from Switzerland to Vienna, is a private company. In the lean years of Austria's finances, after its two exhausting wars, the Government sold it for a song to a French-Italian company, who have made many millions by this lucky purchase.

For Tyrol the shrewd purchase of the *Südbahn* by strangers did not prove an unmitigated blessing, for the line has been treated as a milch-cow, and it can hardly be cited as a pattern of what a well-managed railway should be like. Beginning with its obsolete rolling-stock, its antediluvian traffic regulations, its totally insufficient and antiquated railway-station at

Innsbruck, whose sanitary arrangements are of medieval primitiveness, down to the dangerous penuriousness displayed by its directors in neglecting to lay down a second line of rails on those portions of the line where the traffic has more than trebled within the last few years, the management is open to improvement. That so far not a single passenger has lost his life in the forty years of the existence of the Tyrolese part of the *Südbahn* is, it is true, a performance of which the company might be proud, were it not for the fact that this immunity from accidents must be ascribed chiefly to the paternal care with which the Government supervises and minutely examines every detail of all railway-works in the country. Their powers to do so are of the widest nature, and they are wielded with a strict attention and critical discrimination that might well be introduced into other countries. I know at least one person who, after travelling some 150,000 miles or more on its railways in fifteen visits to North America, never fails to heave a sigh of relief when he returns to the land where, in more than forty long years, not a single passenger has been smashed up, burnt alive, scalded to death, drowned, decapitated, or otherwise "done up."*

Our express, which, it is pleasant to remember, takes the traveller from Berlin to Rome in about the same time that it took him a couple of generations ago to cover the seventy-eight miles from Innsbruck to Bozen,

* In 1907 the total number of persons killed on the railways of the United States was 5,000, and over 76,000 were injured.

CORTINA AND MTE CRISTALLO

stops for the first breather at Matrei, half-way up the northern slope. Here half a century ago some highly interesting antiquarian discoveries were made, showing that it must have been an important settlement already in pre-Roman times, and, as also many Roman relics have been found there, it is certain that the legions of Drusus and Tiberius, the first known conquerors of the land in the mountains, found the commanding situation of Matrei an inviting one for settlement. From this place the railway climbs by steep gradients and long curves up to the height of land, passing on its way a tiny lake not far from which there is a chapel marking the spot where once stood an interesting monument, the story of which reminds one rather of the ever-true saying that there is nothing new under the sun. It consisted of a column erected in memory of the meeting at this spot of Emperor Charles V. and his brother Ferdinand, on the former's return from his second African expedition (1541). The latter had proved not only a fiasco, but undid much of the good accomplished by Charles's successful siege of Tunis six years previously, when, by his victory over Chaireddin and the reinstallation of the exiled Mulei Hassan on the vanquished usurper's throne, he solved a sort of mediæval Moroccan embroglio in a manner which the German Emperor of to-day would probably like to follow in the case of the present Mulei.

The station "Brenner" marks, as I have said, the actual watershed, and close to it, in the same narrow valley, shut in by the impending mountains, there is

situated the Brenner Bath, one of the many thermal springs for which Tyrol is famous. Its waters—there are cold and hot springs—are said to resemble those of the more famous Gastein, but it does not enjoy the same favour among fashionable frequenters of spas, its somewhat primitive hotel accommodation appealing more to the less exigeant natives. The Brenner Baths were known already in the Middle Ages. If not to this day, certainly until quite lately it was the custom to distribute there among poor visitors the revenues of a bequest made 300 years ago by the Knight Geizkoffler. Every indigent visitor had free use of the baths, and was not only supplied with a dole of salt for his meals, but received a trifling money gift, provided he could show a "clean bill of soul"—*i.e.*, that he had confessed and had received absolution.

Gossensass is the next village on the railway, and is becoming a favourite summer resort among quiet folk who seek beautiful spots not yet overcrowded and rendered expensive.

There are some fine walks, and for the more energetic also some good climbs, in the neighbourhood; while the hotel accommodation, if the requirements are moderate, is, I believe, quite good, the Viennese cuisine being the rule.

Sterzing, the quaint old posting-town, is our next halt, and is quite worth a visit. Like its Unter Innthal fellow-sufferers, Rattenberg and Schwaz, Sterzing's good times departed when the railway was opened, and its once busy main street, every second house of which

was an inn, presents now a pathetic picture of desertedness. If one visits the place in the off season, one is tempted to ask on what the inhabitants live. There is an interesting old town-hall, the main room of which is still used as council-chamber. It is a gem of early sixteenth-century craftmanship. From the ceiling hangs a famous *Lusterweibel*, or chandelier, formed of the horns of a bouquetin and the bust of a woman representing Lucretia thrusting the dagger into her breast. It is an exquisite piece of wood-carving, dating from about the year 1500, and has been copied and recopied dozens of times, a keen English collector once offering the town £3,000 for it. The quaint, somewhat low room, with its panelled walls and fine specimens of hand-wrought door-hinges, is much in the same state in which it was 400 years ago, when that restless Imperial traveller Maximilian often passed through Sterzing, and, we can be sure, must have cast envious glances at the handsome trophy that adorned this exquisite chandelier. The beast that once carried these huge horns probably was killed in the mountains surrounding this peak-bowered little town, but, as we know from numerous protective measures introduced by Maximilian, the *Steinbock* was then already getting scarce in the Alps, for his horns were highly prized. Cups and goblets made of this trophy were supposed to possess, not only the power of revealing the presence of poison, but of giving youth and virility to old men.

In Sterzing there is another building known as the Jöchelsthurn, a *Herrenhaus*, or manse, containing a

fine Gothic ceiling, though the effect of this remarkable carving is greatly marred by successive coats of grey paint. The exquisite details afford a wide field for studying the Gothic of Tyrol, which in several respects differs from all other schools of that period.*

Two ancient castles, Reifenstein and Sprechenstein, top eminences near Sterzing; and if the visitor is interested in medieval architecture, the former is worth visiting, as there are some fifteenth-century frescoes and a few pieces of furniture left which recall the period of its glory, of which, alas! there is otherwise no trace left, the castle being practically a ruin.

Some of the lowest-lying ground near Sterzing, before it was drained, was a marsh, and medieval legends made the *Sterzinger Moos* the last dwelling-place of defunct spinsters, each will-o'-the-wisp flame floating at night-time over the marsh representing an unhappy maiden lady searching restlessly for a husband. What has become of these poor souls since navvies have trenched and drained the place history does not relate. Let us hope that they now share those breezy dwelling-places of elfs and fairies high up in the ice-caves of glaciers, where the eternal snow can best quench the hell-fire of their torments.

From Sterzing to Franzensfeste, where the railway to the Pusterthal branches off, the valley becomes a narrow defile, steep mountains shutting it in on both sides. What it lacks in scenic attractions is, however, made up

* See *The Land in the Mountains* for details regarding the Gothic in Tyrol.

in historic interest, for every foot of the twelve miles is drenched with the blood of brave Tyrolese and of their foes, for here took place some of the fiercest fighting during the nineteen centuries of Tyrol's written history. At one spot, where the mountains approach each other particularly close, Nature has provided incomparable natural defences. It is known as the *Sachsen Klemme*, the tight place of the Saxon allies of Napoleon. Here, on the precipitous mountain slopes, the Tyrolese erected their famous stone avalanches by which they overwhelmed the enemy's armies marching along the highroad at their feet. By these means as well as by their unerring fire the Tyrolese, under their peasant leaders Speckbacher and the monk Haspinger, defeated Marshal Lefebvre, fighting for months against overwhelming odds.

Soon after leaving Franzensfeste, a railway-station which during the tourist season is terribly overcrowded, the valley widens out, and we obtain glimpses of an entirely different-looking country and of a southern vegetation. Fine leafy trees and the vine begin to replace the more sombre pine-forests, and, with a suddenness that probably cannot be rivalled in any other spot in Europe, we exchange the landscape, vegetation and climate of the North for the less austere scenery, widespreading chestnut-trees, and vineyards, fanned by the balmier air of the South. As we dip down from the Brenner, and our train pulls up at the venerable Brixen, we reach a storied country the history of which is one of the most ancient outside

of classic Italy. Here we get to places that were old settlements a thousand years ago, towns that look back upon the earliest days of the Christian era, communities that flourished when the Roman Empire was in the making.

Just before we reach Brixen we see from the train a straggling group of buildings surrounded by a fortified wall, with a big square-roofed church in the centre. It is the old monastery of Neustift, as interesting to historians as it is to archæologists, for it is one of the most ancient alpine hospices of which history has left us any record. Hither the weary travellers, making ready to face the dreaded Brenner Pass, or those who had accomplished the traverse, went to find shelter, and, if sick, also hospital treatment. It was founded in the year 1142, and there is left at least one building that dates from that period, a small church, curiously circular, very like S. Angelo, about which hot archæological controversies have been waged. The main church, a vast structure adorned in the baroque style, is a mass of stucco work, gold, and fresco painting.

Neustift contains a fine library and a great quantity of ancient manuscripts, and in it were once some very fine pieces of Gothic furniture. These, however, now adorn a certain castle near Vienna and other notable collections. There are also some good early masters, but to see these and the library a special permission from the Prior is required, for it was found that not all visitors could be trusted.

What made Neustift such an important point in

the Middle Ages was that near its fortified portals there converged three routes of mediæval travel—viz., the road through the Pusterthal, originally made by Cæsar, which led from Aquileia, then the Queen of the Adriatic ; secondly, the road from Venice through, or rather across, the Dolomites, which is still known as the *Heiden Strasse*, or heathens' road ; and lastly, the most important of all, the great highway from the Po country, via Trent and the Adige Valley. At Neustift they converged, and here the traveller, fresh from the snowy, inhospitable traverse of the Alps, met those bent northwards themselves, who, we can well imagine, eagerly listened to the woeful tale of the dangers, hardships, and privations that had to be faced when crossing the avalanche-swept mountain paths. Of the perfectly constructed Roman highroad, an engineering masterpiece, hardly a vestige was left. Five centuries of utter neglect and the vicissitudes of an alpine climate had swept away every trace of it as effectually as the chaotic upheaval of nations had obliterated art and letters from the face of Europe.

One of the earliest travellers of the Middle Ages, who must have still seen traces of the great Imperial highroad across the Brenner, was Venantius Fortunatus in his pilgrimage across the Continent in 564, and from him we obtain valuable information regarding the then topographical nomenclature, much of which disappeared in the following two or three unlettered centuries that left such a significant blank in the country's history.

From Charlemagne's time onwards the famous

Kaiserzüge, the *expedito Romana* of the heads of the Holy Roman Empire, created at times a vast traffic ; for these war lords, even if intent upon peaceable projects, were invariably accompanied by a vast army of the most motley description imaginable, consisting not of regular trained troops, but of thousands of vassal lords, each again accompanied by a contingent of armed men, answering the call of their overlord according to feudal law. In the 300 years following Otto I.'s first incursion into Lombardy in 951, the Alps were crossed some eighty times by German Emperors, and more than half—viz., forty-six traverses —occurred by way of the Brenner Pass. What the advent of such a disorderly horde of pillaging marauders meant for the wretched country through which it passed, even if war was not being waged, we nowadays, in an age of an organized commissariat and strict discipline, can hardly realize. If ever two districts could tell tales of unspeakable woe, it was the regions lying at the northern and southern foot of the Brenner Pass.

Historians have gone to the trouble to tabulate these alpine traverses so as to arrive at the speed of each march, and some interesting details are the result of these investigations. The average distance covered daily by these hosts was twelve and a half miles per marching day, at which rate, to give one instance only, Frederick I. on his second expedition to Italy (1158) took his 100,000 foot troops and 15,000 horsemen, moving in five columns, across the Alps.

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO

A much greater speed was attained by great personages when travelling with a small retinue only. Thus, we know of one, Bishop Wolfger of Passau, who rode, A.D. 1204, in one day from Trent to Bozen—thirty miles — and made equally long rides on other occasions.

It was a motley crowd that, in ordinary times, was to be met on the Brenner road, and with which the primitive accommodation of the inns had to be shared by better-class travellers, as we can learn from the interesting diary of the last-named Church lord. Besides traders of all sorts, pilgrims and Crusaders, monks and friars, there were lay and ecclesiastic students going to or returning from some seat of learning, richer in book lore than in soldi, who were not above claiming charity from our diarist as he was riding along the same road on his mule. Then there were minstrels going from castle to castle "to say and to sing," then comedians of both sexes attending fairs, jugglers, mendicants, vagrant priests, musicians, and knightly *Minnesänger*. One and all sought shelter at night at cloister or castle door if they lacked money to pay their reckoning at the inns; or if the former remained closed to their knock, there were the hospices at Matrei, Sterzing, and at Neustift. These owed their existence either to charitable bequests or to the munificence of the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem, the Teutonic Knights, or other charitable orders. For all these weary wanderers, the wreckage of crude mediævalism, stranded on the great Alpine pass,

these shelters must have proved an inestimable boon.*

Brixen, within a mile or two of Neustift, was once a far more important place than it is to-day, for since the twelfth century it was the seat of a sovereign Prince-Bishop, who wielded temporal as well as secular powers over a great stretch of country. Shorn of their sovereign powers, the present Bishops of Brixen no longer are rulers, except of the black coats of which this town contains a surprising number. Fancy a town of only 5,000 inhabitants containing twelve churches, a cathedral, an episcopal palace, five monasteries and cloisters, as well as the largest seminary for young clerics in the country. If one looks at all these stately buildings, and surveys the retired lives led by these contemplative religious men who dwell in them, one's surprise disappears at the exceedingly copious literature relating to the Church as well as to the history of the country that has emanated from these cells, and one begins to realize that the study of

* In the act of writing the above the local papers bring an account of a motor journey performed by the Archduke Eugen on March 1, 1908, over the snow-covered Brenner, which brings out in strong contrast the comfort and the speed of modern travel when compared with the hardships and dangers of mediæval travel at winter-time over this pass. The Archduke covered the distance from Meran to Innsbruck, 154 kilometres, or just under 100 English miles, in five hours in his 40 horse-power car, notwithstanding that a fresh fall of snow impeded progress over roads covered with some feet of snow. It was a performance doing great credit to this enthusiastic motorist.

ancient parchments that fill their archives must afford welcome relief to men leading an otherwise somewhat useless existence. Among these monkish students which Brixen has produced, Beda Weber and Fallmerayer are probably the best known. The latter particularly made his name widely known as a traveller and Orientalist. His career was an adventurous one, and it resembles in some respects that of his famous countryman Oswald von Wolkenstein. What the latter was for the fifteenth century the former accomplished 400 years later. Curiously enough, both were born within a few miles of each other, the same solemn row of peaks looking down on the castle* where the famous knightly bard saw the light of day, and on the modest peasant homestead where the Orientalist Fallmerayer was born.

A few years ago Brixen celebrated its millennium, for *Brichsna*, as Brixen was first called, came to the Church as an imperial gift in the year 901 ; but, of course, it is really a good deal older, for Pliny and Ptolemy already speak of the *Brixentes* who inhabited this region, and if stones could speak, marvellously interesting tales of centuries of conquest and bloodshed would be unfolded. The gorge formed by the Eisack, beginning below Brixen and continuing as far as Bozen, a distance of about twenty miles, is one series of defiles,

* Historians do not quite agree in which of the two ancestral castles the great bard was born ; but above holds good for either, as they are near each other, one at the commencement, the other at the end, of the Grödnerthal.

offering incomparable opportunities to resist an invasion.

Through this ravine the Roman legions marched to plant their eagles in Germany's dank forests. Through it, when the days of retribution came, the barbarian hordes poured down upon the Italian plains, fighting their way through Rome's frontier province *Rhætia*. Surging Italy-wards came the Allemanni and the Goths. Attila with his Huns probably used the Brenner, Odoacer with his Heruli certainly did, while Theodoric with his Ostrogoths not only passed and repassed through Tyrol, but made Verona his favourite place of residence.

If time is no great object and one feels like walking, the distance from Brixen to Klausen can be covered on foot, not along the highroad, but by a pleasant and not too steep path which enables one to have a look at one of the most interesting of Tyrol's art treasures *en route*. This is the castle of Vellthurns, also spelt Feldthurn, which contains some of the most superb wainscot work to be seen anywhere. A replica of part of it formed the *clou* of Austria's art exhibits at the Paris Exhibition in 1900. The panelling in this episcopal summer residence dates from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and its intarsia work is pronounced by connoisseurs to be unique and worth at least half a million francs.

The building is by no means large, and having been erected when fortified castles had become obsolete, it is more like a manor-house or small château than a

Burg in the original sense of the word. Here the Prince-Bishops of Brixen spent the hot months of the year, riding up on mules, or they were carried up in litters. For the student of ancient carving, Vellthurns is of the first importance, and the fact that the accounts relating to the panelling, down to every nail and every ounce of varnish, are extant, covering the years 1580-1587, adds an additional interest, for, alas! in how few instances can one find similar work together with the bills, receipted 300 or 400 years ago, in coexistence! On the wainscot in the principal room seven skilled carvers and inlayers worked for seven years, seven months, and seven days, and it is said that the gold employed in gilding the sculptured ornaments in this one room amounted to more than the cost of the building of the castle, which, if true, shows that the poor episcopal villeins who laid the stones cannot have received very adequate wages, for there is, after all, not so much gold about the work. Vellthurns is now the property of the town of Bozen,* an art-loving Prince, Fürst Lichtenstein, having rescued it at the last moment from ruin, the roof having partly fallen in. After restoring it, he presented it to the town fathers of Bozen with a fund sufficient to keep it in

* As an instance at what ridiculously cheap prices one could purchase castles as well as objects of art in Tyrol a generation ago, I may mention that the previous owner of Vellthurns tried for many years to find a purchaser for it, and amongst others it was offered some thirty-five years ago to my mother for just under £1,000. As she had just bought Matzen she declined the offer.

repairs. If one thinks that this occurred in the case of a mansion in a remote corner of poor little Tyrol, it seems a pity that in rich England it was found impossible to save Crosby Hall, a building of far greater historical interest.

The distance from Brixen to Klausen along the high-road is but six miles, but, of course, the roundabout route I have taken the reader in order to visit Vellthurns is considerably longer, and entails a gradual climb of exactly 1,000 feet, for that is the difference in the elevation of the Bishop's summer seat (2,715 feet) and the floor of the valley.

Klausen is a quaint little town of less than 2,000 inhabitants. It consists of a single street that occupies a narrow strip of land between the rushing Eisack and a rock towering up some 600 feet over the houses huddled together at its base. On the summit of the rock stands the ancient Benedictine cloister of Saeben or Seben, which up to the year 992 was the seat of the Bishops of Brixen. In Roman times *Sabiona* was a very important place, for it was the Gibraltar of Tyrol.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GRÖDEN VALLEY AND ITS PEOPLE

As the Gröden Valley forms, properly speaking, part of the Dolomite country, it should, if treated from a geographical point of view, be included in the chapter devoted to that attractive district. But it differs so radically in some respects from any other Dolomite valley that it is as well to treat it separately, and I propose to do so in this place, for the only carriage-way by which Gröden can be approached leaves the Eisack gorge, down which we have been travelling, at Waidbruck, the next station after Klausen.

For the first hour or two after leaving Waidbruck, the visitor, who naturally expects to plunge forthwith into the wild and rugged scenery inseparably associated with the word Dolomites, is destined to disappointment, for rounded foothills screen the real mountains from view. But at last a corner is turned, and the Gröden Valley opens up. Two grey, solemn-looking peaks, the Langkofel and Plattkogel, begin to show up in the background. Their shape is so weirdly strange, their colouring so unearthly pale and absolutely ver-

dureless, and they stand out with such startling impressiveness from the beautiful green meadowland at their base, piercing a cerulean sky, that one's eyes are riveted upon the spectacle.

Our goal is St. Ulrich, the principal village in the valley. No mushroom township in the Far West of America could give a stronger impression of newness than does this old-world village. The houses here are less picturesque than in any other part of Tyrol. They are square box-like buildings with ugly roofs; some are several stories high; all are plastered and white-washed, looking very spick and span. The church itself is decorated within in the latest approved style of "Modern Gothic." All this is surprising, for the inhabitants of the Gröden Valley are like the rest of the Ladiners, amongst the oldest of Tyrol's ancient inhabitants. One therefore naturally expects to find some conservatism in their buildings, but they have modernized their dwellings to the destruction of the picturesque; and this is also noticeable regarding their dress, which is levelled down to the same inartistic standard, their native costume being relegated to special fête-days, and even then it is worn in a modified form.

During the stormy times of the Middle Ages the history of Gröden was that of its feudal lords of the houses of Maulrappen, of Villanders, and of Wolkenstein. Oswald of Wolkenstein, the much-travelled *Minnesänger*, is said by some historians to have been born in an old *Burg*, placed like an eagle's nest high up on a rock at the furthermost end of the valley. He

ST. ULRICH, GRODENTHAL

is perhaps one of the most picturesque and interesting figures in the history of the early part of the fifteenth century.

When the Grödner peasant had no longer to follow his lord to wars abroad or to fight his feuds nearer home, when there was peace in the land and he could turn his whole attention to the tilling of his acres, he soon found, as the population grew, that the soil and the short summer did not enable him to grow enough foodstuffs to keep him for more than half the year. This was no doubt the first incentive that induced some of the more gifted and enterprising to turn to another industry as a means of support: Early in the seventeenth century the Grödners were already known as wood-carvers of no mean capacity, and they supplied some of the neighbouring churches with carved figures of saints and with crucifixes for the altars.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century it occurred to a certain Johann Demetz to carve picture-frames, which he decorated with wreaths of carved fruit and flowers. His success was such that many other Grödners were induced to follow his example, and a good trade was done in these frames for some years, but in the beginning of the nineteenth century their manufacture seems to have entirely ceased. It was about the middle of last century that some of the carvers branched off into a new line, and started the carving of toys, and began to make those wooden-jointed dolls and animals of all descriptions that have rejoiced the hearts of children for the last hundred

years. Whereas in the last quarter of the eighteenth century there were only forty carvers, at the beginning of the nineteenth century their numbers had already increased to 300, and to-day, I am told, there are near 1,000.

In the early days of this industry all the articles that required colouring were carried by the Grödners to Ober Ammergau, a distance of about 150 miles. There they received the necessary decoration, and were carried back again to the Gröden Valley, thence to be carried out again by native pedlars to the various markets. Only late in the eighteenth century did a Grödner attempt the colouring of the toys, but from that time the painters increased, and at the present day all the work is done in the valley, one-fourth of the population being occupied in colouring and gilding what the other three-fourths carve. It is only when you consider how remote a place this valley was till 1856, when the road from Waidbruck was first constructed, and how far removed from the markets of the world it was till the railway over the Brenner was built in 1867, that you realize what untiring energy and what enterprise these people must have possessed to enable their manufactures to become so universally known. All these wares were carried on the backs of pedlars over the wearisome and circuitous footpaths that led over the various Alpine passes from the Gröden Valley to the outside world, for high mountains hemmed in their native place on all four sides. At first these pedlars only visited the villages and districts nearest their home, but they soon extended

their wanderings beyond, and in the eighteenth century the Grödner and his carvings were well known in every town, and were familiar sights at all the fairs and markets of Germany, if not of Europe. They soon extended their trade, and when they had disposed of their own stock they filled up their packs with goods bought in the various towns they passed through tc peddle on their homeward journey. By dint of great thrift, some of these men saved enough to start in trade in a more wholesale way, and to found business firms in some of the larger towns. A century ago there were over 350 Grödners, out of a population of 3,500, thus established, being distributed among the chief towns of Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, and Russia, and two of this enterprising race had even established themselves in Philadelphia.

The wonderful tramps of some of these men surpass in length all the feats of pedestrianism of to-day. Some of the present generation of Grödners can remember that their fathers walked with their enormous loads many times to Paris and back. One native of St. Ulrich's, Johann Runggaldier by name, is known to have repeatedly walked from Lisbon to Memel, a town in the extreme North of Germany, on the borders of Russia. One of the most remarkable of these eighteenth-century pedlars was Johann Dominik Malknecht, the son of very poor peasant folk (he was born in 1724), who learned in early childhood to carve crucifixes, and soon, with his load on his back, started out as a pedlar. His first attempt being unsuccessful,

and no help being obtainable from his parents, he had to sell most of his clothes to enable him to make a second start, besides having to carve the greatest part of his own wares. This time, however, he had better luck, and before very long he was a well-known personage at some of the Austrian and Bohemian fairs. Through great economy he was able to save enough to make larger speculations in other goods. He was wary and enterprising, and generally successful. At night he always slept in a shed or in an old packing-case to save the expense of a night's lodging at inns ; he lived on the hard black bread of the peasants, and purchased milk only to sustain him on his tramps. His journey to Vienna and back, a distance of some 500 miles, thus cost him only one florin (1s. 8d.).

As his savings increased he enlarged his transactions, but did not change his way of living, nor even allow himself a decent coat. So miserable, indeed, were his clothes that many charitably-minded persons offered him alms, which, however, he was never known to accept. In his seventieth year he married a widow of Gröden. He was, however, too old to take kindly to the restrictions of a domestic life, and, settling a good sum on his wife, he resumed his roamings once more, and continued them until the day of his death in 1809, at the age of eighty-five. Although so miserly towards himself, he was generous to others, and gave large sums away during his lifetime to the poor and to the Church in all the towns he visited. At his death he left a fortune which for those days was a very large one,

500,000 florins ; half of this he bequeathed to charities in his native place, and the rest he left to his many needy relatives. Among the former were legacies to pay a schoolmaster, and to provide for a resident doctor for St. Ulrich.

To-day Gröden's progress would cause Master Malknecht to shout with joy, for it has grown into an exceedingly flourishing little community, the like of which, representing as it does a strange mixture of agriculture with art, of peasant with artist, I doubt if one could find in any other part of the world.

The more proficient of the Grödners, to speak of the present time, after going through a course of technical tuition in the *Fachschule* established at St. Ulrich by a paternal Government, devote themselves to real art—*i.e.*, to the production of wood-carving, in which individual taste and skill are expressed and which does not consist of blindly copying. Their work takes the shape of crucifixes, Saints, Madonnas, and of whole altars, that are sent all over the world, the Roman Catholic missions in distant over-sea countries being, I am told, the best customers. When I was travelling through the interior of British Columbia, I saw a Passion Play being performed by Indians, pupils at a remote Roman Catholic mission that was doing excellent work in training the aborigines to become tillers of the soil and raisers of live stock. At this Passion Play the Christ on the cross was represented by a life-size figure carved in the Gröden Valley.

The more unskilled Grödners find ready employ-

ment in the wholesale manufacture of wooden dolls and other toys, such as animals, which they turn out by the million. Even here the conservative spirit of the Tyrolese betrays itself, one family producing nothing but elephants, another houseful of diligent people turning out only cows, or tigers, or lions ; while others devote themselves exclusively to the manufacture of those straight-backed, stiff-jointed, black-haired, pink-cheeked dolls that bring pleasure to untold thousands of poor children all over the world. Work is specialized to an amusing extent ; one woman will do the rough blocking-out all her life, another will shape the trunk and head, a third will make nothing but legs and arms all her life, the whole being reduced, of course, to a mechanical process. Walking through the streets of St. Ulrich, which is the centre of the valley and of the carving business, one comes across amusing signs of the people's occupation. Here comes, lying full length on a wheelbarrow, a life-size figure of our Saviour, or of the *Mater Dolorosa*, being taken to the painter's workshop ; there we see toddling along an aged Grödnerin, on her back a huge basket filled to the brim with one component article—dolls' bodies, or dolls' hands or legs, or cows—which represent her week's work at home, and which she is now taking to the man who has ordered this lot and on whose premises the various bits will then be fitted together, the painting being done by another man. Or we see several men busily engaged packing up an altar in a huge packing-case destined for the other end

of the world, to South America, or China, or Australia, or some mission on the Pacific Coast. It is ablaze with gold and bright colours, and the central figures are works of art in their way, though one would like to see them coated with more subdued tints and the gilding put on with less prodigality. If you enter into conversation with any of the business men, simple peasant folk as they are, you will find them exceedingly well informed concerning the protective tariffs of different nations, the various routes by which they can send their goods ; and you will discover that Grödners are established in many out-of-the-way places, and are evidently doing a thriving business.

While upon this topic, it may not be without interest to give in brief figures the domestic muster-roll of St. Ulrich, which, having been lately raised to a *Markt*—a settlement larger than a village, but not large enough to be made a town—a Government report was published, from which the following figures are the epitome. It must be premised that St. Ulrich enjoys an unusual prosperity ; in fact, there is probably no other community of similar size in Tyrol that makes a better showing. The official record shows that its 2,210 inhabitants dwell in 353 houses ; that it has a school, consisting of five classes, in which nine teachers instruct 344 children. Besides this school it has, as I have already mentioned, a technical institute, maintained by the Government, in which six teachers instruct 203 scholars in wood-carving and modelling. Its post, telegraph, and telephone office is served by

four officials and three postmen. The Government provides three *Gendarmes*, or rural policemen; it has two doctors, who supply their own drugs; four midwives (they have all to be certificated) and a vet. There are one public and three private electric supply works, the former supplying street-lighting. For the enforced insurance of houses and furniture an annual contribution to the Central Mutual Fire Insurance Office of the province, representing the sum of £788, is paid; in internal and Government taxes it pays £1,250 per annum. There are in St. Ulrich, among the persons occupied with various industries, 260 wood-carvers, 41 carpenters, and 85 painters and gilders, not counting the large number of peasants in outlying districts engaged in wood-carving. Its volunteer fire-brigade consists of 60 trained men, and 40 high-power hydrants are distributed over the village. Water is supplied by one public and three private waterworks, the electric generating stations being supplied by them. As communal property St. Ulrich possesses 3,000 *Joch* or 4,500 English acres of woods and pasturage, and a village rifle range. Of late years the number of tourists visiting it has steadily increased, the number last year being 20,800; but, unlike Swiss villages, its prosperity in no way depends upon the tourist business. Prices charged by the six larger inns (they call themselves hotels) and the six *Gasthäuser*, or smaller inns, are still on moderate lines; and while one section of the population does not regard the annual invasion of curious strangers, who insist on inspecting the work-

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shops and warehouses at all hours of the day, generally without making purchases, as a blessing, others desire to see the number of these increased.

Besides the Post Office Savings Bank there is also a communal savings bank, which was opened on October 1, 1906. By the end of the following July it had already 622 depositors, representing more than £22,700, and its managers had lent out, on first mortgages, about a third of that sum.

And now let us bid good-bye to this industrious little mountain community, and see what the real Dolomites are like. We can penetrate into them from every side, the most usual being, perhaps, from the north by way of the Pusterthal. To do so we have to hark back a few stations to Franzenfeste, and from there branch off to Toblach, whence a fine high-road through an impressive gorge takes us into the very heart of this remarkable region.

CHAPTER IX

THE DOLOMITES

It is safe to say that nowhere else in the universe has it pleased the Creator to evolve another such a square of mountain land (roughly speaking, some forty miles each way) as the Dolomites.* Close upon half a century has passed since the appearance of the first English book (Gilbert and Churchill's *The Dolomite Mountains*) descriptive of this region, and more than a generation since one of the most pleasant books of travel ever written—*i.e.*, Miss Edwards' *Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys*—first delighted the reading globe-trotter. It may be worth while to cite a passage or two from her introduction :

"It is difficult to speak of the people, of the climate, of the scenery, without risk of being thought too partial or too enthusiastic. To say that the arts of extortion are here unknown; that the old patriarchal notion of hospitality still survives, miraculously, in the

* To be quite precise, there exists another group of dolomite peaks west of the Adige Valley—*i.e.*, the Brenta Range—but it is not part of the Dolomites proper.

minds of the inn-keepers ; that it is as natural to the natives of these hills and valleys to be kind and helpful and disinterested, as it is natural to the Swiss to be rapacious ; that here one escapes from hackneyed sights, from overcrowded hotels, from the dreary routine of table d'hôtes, from the flood of Cook's tourists, is, after all, but to say that life in the South-Eastern Tyrol is yet free from all the discomforts that have of late years made Switzerland unendurable ; and that for those who love sketching and botany, mountain climbing and mountain air, and who desire, when they travel, to leave London and Paris behind them, the Dolomites offer a playground far more attractive than the Alps proper."

Thus wrote this gifted authoress in 1873, contributing thereby no little to the invasion which has since overwhelmed her beloved playground, and which has brought the changes which in the end, it is to be feared, will probably make it a second Switzerland.

Big hotels—not quite such eyesores as trouble us in Switzerland, but, still, caravansaries capable of housing and feeding hundreds day after day ; new mountain roads penetrating into the very heart of this attractive region, roads upon which in the season dozens of automobiles daily career ; scores of Alpine Club huts, some of them clinging like swallow-nests to heaven-soaring cliffs ; telephone, telegraph, and electric light poles galore ; and half a dozen narrow-gauge mountain railways, either completed or semi-finished or in contemplation—all these so-called improvements have in

the intervening thirty-five years robbed the Dolomites of their pristine charms. But stay: can this be truly said of the Dolomites as a whole, or is it only true of that portion so far "discovered" by hotel syndicates, and by writers of books tending to attract travellers to hitherto unknown regions? When I gave the dimensions of the square containing the Dolomites as something like forty miles each way, this was meant to define the opened-up part, the "hotelized" region only, and it was not intended to include the Lienzer Dolomites or the district east of the longitude of Auronzo and the Piave River. Go east of that line, keeping, of course, south of the Drau River, and you will reach ground untouched by the hand of the inn-improver and the Alpine Club hut-builder, ground which might be likened to what the central Dolomites were like when that pleasant quartet, Gilbert and Churchill with their wives, first set eyes on the glories of this favoured region.* There the wayside hostelries and albergos are still as primitive as they were when these travellers first "sized up" the aiguilles from the climber's point of view, pronouncing not a few sheer inaccessible. There the chamois still roam about, undisturbed by shouting tourists and by the smoke and smell of humanity from Alpinist huts. Only a year or two ago I actually killed a good specimen of this shy game on the very highroad leading to a pass

* Gilbert and Churchill, by including these eastern areas, give the size of the Dolomites as a square, of which each side measures sixty miles, or 3,600 square miles.

already used by Cæsar! But there, I will say no more to lure the adventurous tourist to investigate this promised land of the sportsman, for has not his advent in other parts of the country done irreparable damage to game?

But the reader who has never visited the Dolomites may well ask, What are the vaunted attractions of these mountains? What is there about this region that makes it such a unique display of Nature's powers? That the rock of which are made these weird-looking pinnacles that soar heavenwards, unlike any other mountains in the world, is really very ordinary stone—simply a magnesian limestone—is a fact well known to every geologist. Even the Londoner can daily examine a noble pile constructed of it, for, curious as it sounds, the Houses of Parliament are constructed of this dolomite limestone that came from the Bolsover quarries in Derbyshire.*

In the Dolomites of Tyrol this peculiar limestone, instead of being found in isolated strata only, so predominates as to claim the scenery for its own, and in this lies the uniqueness of the district. Unlike the gloomy blackish-grey to which the dirt-laden London smoke and fog have reduced the pile by the Thames, those huge Tyrolese creations of Dame Nature have retained their virgin freshness. And though the process of disintegration and denudation is proceeding at a pace by which in the course of millions of years those

* Its name commemorates the discoverer, M. Dolomieu, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

towering pinnacles, fretted walls, grotesque spires—some of which soar into the heavens almost 12,000 feet, the whole looking like the ruins of a world overthrown by Titans—will be levelled down to heaps of débris and talus hardly higher than the surrounding plateaux, no malign agents are tampering with their wonderful colouring. The prevailing tint is an ashy pale grey, and, as the higher elevations are bare of every vestige of vegetation, the contrast presented by their lower slopes, which are clothed in various greens, from the sombre hue of the pine-woods, the lighter tints of larch-forests, to the vivid green of the Alpine grassland, upon which in spring Nature bestows all the variegated colours of a very remarkable flora—all these, by contrast, enhance that stark paleness of the rocks above. I have said that this grey is the prevailing colour, but here and there these giants, owing to the presence of minerals and other causes, are stained a rich orange, or brown madder, or deep red, or a violet. And as if this was not sufficient to astonish the eyes of mankind, Nature, in addition to what might be called the Dolomites' everyday undress uniform, has granted them a glorious parade raiment, which is assumed by many of the favourably situated members of this phalanx of giants in fine weather to welcome day, and again to usher in night when the rest of the landscape is already resting under nocturnal shadows. This sunrise and sunset attire is worn but for a brief space, but while it is donned nothing more glorious and at the same time mysterious can be imagined. This

afterglow suffuses the great towering peaks with a deep rosy pink, which makes them look as if they were huge ingots fresh from some vast subterranean furnace, and are awaiting some titanic hand that will forge them, if that were possible, into yet more bizarre shapes, and to fringe their serrated crests with still more tapering pinnacles and crockets.

To one who has never seen this afterglow on the Dolomites, and who suddenly comes face to face with it, quite a supernatural impression is conveyed, from which even the most matter-of-fact and phlegmatic natures cannot at first free themselves, as I once had reason to notice. It happened a few years ago during my tenancy of a chamois-shoot in the eastern part of the Dolomites. One season a friend had joined me there, and, as it was his first experience of Alpine sport, I took him about the mountains for the first few days. The third afternoon, the first fine one we had, after a long day of chamois-stalking, we were sitting smoking our pipes on a col at an altitude of not more than 7,000 feet, overlooking the lovely Wollayer See, a tiny tarn over which rises, in splendid isolation, a great and then still nameless peak of the superb Collin, or Mount Coglians, a perfect Dolomite giant. Round us lay in absolute stillness and wildness that yet unexplored and extraordinarily wild region of the Birgen Gebirg and the Valentiner peaks, the heart of our preserve, where we roamed about for five weeks that year without seeing a single human being beyond the keepers and an Alp herd or two. Tired

out by his unaccustomed sport, my friend had fallen asleep on the springy Alpine turf, while I sat at his side taking in the ever-new beauties of a perfect sunset. The great orb had long disappeared, and the vast landscape spread at our feet had almost sunk away from sight in the shades of night, when the great peak overhead gradually began to "pink up," as it caught on its vast ashy precipices the last reflections of the sun that had gone out of our world at least half an hour before. At first it was only a faint rosy blush that suffused cliffs which a short minute before were of an ashy grey pallor. Deeper and more vivid grew the blush, while the cloudless sky, as if to mark the contrast, assumed that wonderfully delicate apple green which the early Italian masters so dearly loved to introduce into their backgrounds. Presently the pink grew deeper and deeper in intensity, and the whole towering Matterhorn-like giant began to stand out in the gloaming, dyed a rosy red that gleamed and shone with an unearthly brilliancy. I had seen it hundreds of times, but, instead of palling upon one, the wondrous beauty of the phenomenon claims one's admiration more and more. At last I remembered my friend at my side, and I gave him a dig which roused him with a start. He sat up rubbing his eyes. When he did look up, the sight seemed fairly to take his breath away. 'By Jove!' he exclaimed, as he gripped my arm, 'where am I? What does this mean? Is that mountain on fire, or am I dreaming?' And letting go of my arm, he jumped up and walked rapidly to

the other side of the col, where the world had already sunk into darkness, and one could see far down at one's feet in the dark valley the one solitary twinkling light of our lodge, the only human habitation in all that sea of mountains. Though during our stay he witnessed that scene a dozen or a score of times, and saw it also at dawn, when the order is reversed —for then the ashy pallor is most deathlike just before the sun-rays first light up the beacon cliffs—he never would talk about the first impression which that startling vision had made upon his otherwise intensely unemotional nature.

The Dolomites can be approached from every quarter of the compass. From the west, besides the Gröden Valley, of which we have already given a full description, it can be reached by the narrow and wild Eggenthal that leads from Bozen to the Karer See, where under the shadow of the Rosengarten group a first-class hotel (5,500 feet) now makes it possible to enjoy exquisite scenery amid luxurious surroundings. From the north, besides the Toblach route that leads to Cortina, the Enneberg Valley, beginning near Brunneck, affords a pretty and decidedly more novel entrance into the heart of the mountains, though perhaps, on account of simpler accommodation, it is to be recommended only to those who travel without cumbrous luggage and are prepared to do without table d'hôtes and evening dress. A trifle further east than Toblach, the Sexten Valley, which you reach from the station Innichen, offers some superb scenery, and

a delightful walk from Sexten to Landro and Cortina should not be forgotten by pedestrians. Of the approaches from the east it is not necessary to speak here, for only the more adventurous should attempt it from that side, and then only after a perusal of a good guide-book or of Gilbert and Churchill's account. From the south a capital carriage-road leads up to Cortina from Belluno past Pieve di Cadore, where Titian was born. And, finally, from the south-west several side-valleys of the Adige between Bozen and Trent enable the traveller to reach the Dolomites by mule-tracks if not carriage roads.

The lakes in the Dolomites are unfortunately few and small, and one or two of them have a bad habit of shrinking to mere pools in very hot seasons, while others are the more or less recent creation of avalanches or moraines. But they all are beautiful tarns, from the austere desolation of the highest, the Wollayer See, to the Pragser Wildsee, that mirrors the towering Seekofel, which, though only 9,200 feet high, is a fine enough fellow; the Dürrensee, in which Mount Cristallo and Piz Popena reflect their glacier-flecked slopes; the neighbouring Misurina Lake, upon whose placid surface is mirrored the famous Drei Zinnen; or Lake Alleghe, over which the Civite rears its massive heights; not to forget the Karer See, in which the broad-based Latimer sees itself reflected.

It would be difficult to describe the charm of this district in the early seventies, a period one could still call the "good old days," when it was my good fortune

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to visit it in the flush of youthful vigour, "doing" many of the stiffest climbs, but, alas! unable to conquer any first-class virgin peaks; for I had been preceded by earlier birds, amongst them a cousin of mine, who, a good deal older than I was, had commenced his conquest of virgin Dolomites quite ten years before I first set foot on any of them, and after whom—not after me—one of the giants has been named.

My special crony in those days was a young native of the Sextenthal, and I doubt if there ever were two happier climbing comrades, scrambling about from dawn to dusk, "backing" each other up desperate-looking chimneys, and crawling across impossible-looking perpendicular cliffs, than were Michael Innerkofler and the writer. Michael became afterwards the most noted guide in the Schluderbach region, but at this time he was a humble *Knecht* at old Ploner's mountain inn, and he went with me for a daily wage of a florin and a half, not as a guide, but as a brother mountaineer. We shared our loads, slept out in haylofts under one blanket, and helped each other over those giddy *mauvais pas* which to-day nothing that the world holds would tempt me to try. In physical respects we complimented each other: Michael was short, broad, and possessed great strength, while I was of a lankier build, with much longer reach, which often enabled me to get a grip of rocks overhead which Michael's shorter arms failed to attain. In a word, a more delightful companion for a youth ea er to win his spurs in rock-

climbing in the Dolomites it would be impossible to imagine. We hardly ever used the rope, and we gloried to scale crags by new routes, or, if that was impossible—for many of these formidable peaks can be ascended by one route only—we matched ourselves to accomplish the ascent in faster time than had hitherto been done. Not very many years afterwards, some time in the early eighties, while I was mountaineering at the other end of the world among the then still virgin peaks of the Selkirks of British Columbia, news reached me that poor Michael had lost his life on the slopes of the Cristallo, ground he knew as well as his pocket, in bravely saving the lives of his two *Herren*. His tragic fate recalled to my mind a wish he once quaintly expressed to me, when facing a particularly desperate-looking chimney on the Drei Zinnen: "I don't mind if I get killed, if only there are mountains like these to climb in the hereafter." I hope he has found them.

After what I have said in the earlier part of this chapter regarding the changes that are overtaking not only the Dolomites, but the whole of Tyrol, the reader will perhaps pardon my letting off some steam, for I should like to confess being possessed of a strong desire to see Tyrol spared the worst features of Switzerland's fate. The exploitation of scenic attractions carried on in such a barefaced manner in that country should not be encouraged to extend into Tyrol. The eggshells and greasy sandwich-paper that befoul the greensward of the Wengern Alp, and the gramophone braying on

the balcony of the Little Scheideck, shock one's eyes and ears as much as such horrible excrescences as the Kursaal at Maloja outrage our artistic senses.

Is it not the consensus of most mountain-loving people that the natural aspect of Switzerland is being as spoilt as its people already are? What is it to-day during the season but a huge show for cheap excursionists from overcrowded centres on the banks of the Spree or the Thames, undesirables of a class which we want to leave behind when we seek, by travelling hundreds of miles, to see Nature at her grandest, to enjoy the peace and quiet of uplands on which naught but the tinkling of cow-bells or the far-away *Ave Maria* of a village church bell should be heard. The screech of the funicular, the rumble of the cogwheel mountain railway, the whistle of the steamers that churn up the lakes, the sirens of the factories, the toot-toot of the automobiles, and all the noise and bustle where formerly Nature's grandeur could be enjoyed in the serene silence of an unpolluted atmosphere—these are surely not the sounds which we have come to Switzerland to listen to. And is there not a prodigious amount of humbug and sham about the sickly sentimental and often entirely unreal admiration of Nature to which so many people give vent in hysterical language? Test this once: Spread out before such a "raver" a wondersome panorama, glorified by a really fine sunset, such as July and August are not too prodigal of, and which he or she probably will not see again in such splendour during his or her visit. Spread it out

before them, and at the height of the uniquely grand effect have the table d'hôte bell rung, and see what that *Natur Schwärmer* will do. I know of bets being won, but never of one being lost, by those who backed the jangling call to the trough. Have you ever seen an after-dinner bridge-party at one of those elevated "beauty-spot" caravansaries stop, even for a minute, to watch from the terrace one of the most poetic sights imaginable—the rising full moon as it tops glittering glaciers and ridges of eternal snow, bathing peak after peak, ridge after ridge, in a mysterious silvery sheen, while the inky shadows of night enshroud the rest of the landscape?

But these shams, will they not, like the eggshells and the greasy sandwich-papers, drift away and disappear before the first autumn gale? Nature sweeps away easily enough those eyesores, but can she obliterate as effectually the more permanent defacements of her pristine beauty that are going on everywhere — the gridironing of the Swiss Alps by mountain railways, the erection of hundreds of club huts on elevated spots by fussy Alpine Clubs, the "wiring" and "pegging" of dangerous places, the levelling away of *mauvais pas*, the construction of paths where Nature never intended that paths should be made, the marking of tourist's routes by splashing unsightly blotches of red, blue, or green paint on wayside rocks or trees—usually the nefarious work of some misnomered *Verschönerungs Verein*—and lastly, but not least, the defilement of Nature by plastering prominent objects with gaudy

advertisements, as unsightly as they are repulsive to one's æsthetic feelings?

What right has this present generation to assume that those who come after us will bless us for not leaving God's grandest works in the same condition in which we found them? The Jungfrau or Mont Blanc were not put where they are for financial exploitation by syndicates of hotel-keepers, nor were they created for the sole benefit of a race whose greedy trafficking in Nature's charms appears to know no bounds, and whose example forms such a dangerous precedent for other mountain countries.

And take another point of view, that of the sportsman. In no sport or pastime that tries man's endurance or skill are obstacles diminished or removed; on the contrary, they are generally artificially increased, so as to test all the more the competitors' mettle. Only with the climber is the opposite the fashion. Dozens of Alpine Clubs, *Touristen Vereine*, and *Verschönerungs Committees*—some of the clubs consist of tens of thousands of members *—vie with each other in smoothing away the impeding hurdles, in filling in ditches, in fitting rungs to ladders, thereby reducing the zest as well as the risks of climbing. There is, fortunately, one club that takes no share in this work of levelling down. It is the pioneer among climbing associations, the English Alpine Club, a club which is celebrating

* The German-Austrian Alpine Club has, I believe, close upon 100,000 members, while the *Touristen Verein* has even more members.

its fifty years jubilee as I am writing these lines. Long may it pursue its policy of leaving the Alps as they are, for it is one that posterity will assuredly commend.

The Dolomite region has special interest to another class of people besides the climber, painter, and geologist—namely, to the philologist ; for in many of its villages is spoken that curious linguistic relic of Rhæto-Romanic times, the Ladin language. It is a mixture of ancient Rhætian, vulgarized Latin, and modern Italian and German. Broadly speaking, it is the same dialect that is spoken in the Grisons, but philologists declare that the latter language is not quite the same as that used in Tyrol, calling the one West Ladin, the other East Ladin, and certainly, according to those who have studied them, the pronunciation does differ in some instances quite considerably. A monograph published some years ago by Mr. Russell Martineau gives the interesting result of this eminent philologist's researches.

In Tyrol, out of a population of about 1,000,000 people, there are some 70,000 Ladin-speaking inhabitants,* and while hitherto they have usually been counted among the Italian-speaking population, recent political events, which emphasize the Ladiner's dislike of the Italian, caused them to assert themselves as a separate stock, with affinities that lean more to the German than to their Southern neighbours. One reason why this language has managed to survive so long is that the Ladiners, who travel about more than

* In Switzerland there are about 40,000 Ladiners.

any other people of Tyrol, find it of great assistance in picking up other foreign languages, such as French and Spanish, not to mention Italian and German, of each of which it contains some 15 or 20 per cent. of words. What its real origin was is shrouded in mystery, but it is probable that the Ladiners are of Rhætian origin and were driven to take refuge in these mountain gorges at the time of the country's first conquest, and were able to retain in these retreats their racial peculiarities and speech during the centuries of chaos when Tyrol was overrun by numberless fierce races. The evidence brought forward by phrenologists would seem to bear out this theory, though the question whether the original Rhætians were of Etruscan or of Celtic origin remains, of course, still as unsettled as ever.

CHAPTER X

A VISIT TO THE GROSS GLOCKNER, AND ITS FIRST ASCENT IN WINTER

Now that the reader has heard what the Dolomites are like, I desire to invite him to extend his railway journey an hour or two beyond Toblach, as far as Lienz, and from there take a carriage-drive to the foot of the Austrian Materhorn, as the Gross Glockner is often called. It is the most attractive of all Tyrolese peaks, and the highest in the whole lofty chain of the Noric Alps.*

For the last quarter of a century various Alpine Clubs have studded its slopes with huts, driven iron spikes and put wire ropes at all bad places, and in consequence of these artificial improvements it is to-day a mountain which even women by the dozen climb annually. Before all this had occurred it offered from a mountaineer's point of view enjoyable bits, and as it has more victims, I think, on its conscience than

* On the top of the peak three provinces meet, Tyrol, Salzburg, and Carinthia, so that each claims the Gross Glockner as its own master-peak.

almost any of its Swiss rivals, higher and more difficult as many of them are, there was enough risk about its ascent to give zest to the earlier generation of climbers. After ascending it twice in summer, as scores of others had done, without the slightest trouble, the idea to climb it in winter occurred to me at a time when winter mountaineering was still unknown ; for it was in the month of December, 1874, a winter which became notorious for unusually heavy falls of snow. There was a curious coincidence about the matter. W. A. B. Coolidge, who has become a very well-known climber and writer on Alpine subjects, and I had been at the same English school, and left it about the same time. In the following five or six years we had, however, completely lost sight of each other, when, to my intense surprise, his name suddenly loomed up, comet-like, in the Press of Europe as the premier conqueror of a first-class Swiss peak in mid-winter. For a more unlikely-looking personality for such a mountaineering feat than was the quiet, ever-studious, bespectacled Coolidge, who shunned games and boyish frolic, could not be well imagined. What made his feat even more remarkable was that the great peaks, the Wetterhorn and the Jungfrau, were scaled that memorable January of 1874 also by a lady ; Coolidge being accompanied on both occasions by his aunt, Miss Meta Brevoort, of Boston (U.S.A.), a climber before whom we male bunglers have to doff our hats.

Thus it came to pass that my book-loving schoolmate, who, when I next met him years afterwards as an Oxford

don in his comfortable Magdalen College chambers, still looked the typical student rather than a mountaineer of fame, first put the idea into my head of doing for the Austrian Alps what he had done for the Swiss peaks.

In Tyrol my proposal to scale the Gross Glockner on New Year's Day was greeted with general ridicule, and though I said as little as possible about it beforehand, the thing got bruited about, and I was greeted with derisive smiles wherever I showed my face. It was all very well in Switzerland, it was argued, where mountaineering was made easy by an elaborate system of guides, and where the presence of shelter-huts had reduced already in those comparatively early days the fatigue and risks of winter expeditions. Here in Tyrol the matter was very different, my critics argued. And the Gross Glockner, of all peaks, and in the snowiest winter that had been known for many years! Only the proverbially mad Englishman could possibly select just that mountain and that season for his attempt! But as he never would get beyond the village of Kals—for he would not find fools to accompany him, and alone it was, of course, quite impossible to achieve it—the project was doomed to failure before it was commenced. So argued the general public, and, to tell the truth, the nearer I got to my starting-point, the snowed-in little mountain village of Kals, the more hopeless the plan appeared, and the broader grew the grins of those whom it was necessary to take into my confidence. Snow had fallen the whole of December, the local pocket-handkerchief-sized newspapers were full of

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accounts of villages far less remote than Kals that were entirely cut off from the world, terrific avalanches were recorded from all parts, and traffic on the *Südbahn*—then the only railway in Tyrol—was stopped in many places. This latter piece of news I found to be only too true, for on my journey to Lienz, in the Pusterthal, we were snowed in twice, and I had to break into my stock of tinned food reserved for the expedition before I left the railway train. In fact, a more discouraging and disagreeable railway journey it would be difficult to imagine. Lacking all means of heating the carriages, I was glad of my fur wraps, and for miles one travelled through snow tunnels, open only at the top, the snow-banks on both sides of the track shutting out all view.

From Lienz I proceeded in an open sleigh to Huben, where branches off the little side-glen at the utmost end of which Kals is situated. So high was the snow piled along the track that it reached far above one's head, and during the long drive one saw hardly anything of the surrounding landscape; it was like travelling through a never-ending lane of snow-walls. Of the peasant houses along the route only the first-floor windows were clear of the dazzling masses, and still the white flakes kept coming down. On reaching the solitary inn at Huben, mine host, an old acquaintance, when he heard of my project, could not believe his ears. Snow to him was the worst foe of mankind, and he saw so much of it, and his business suffered so much in consequence of it, that the idea of wilfully battling against snowdrifts and floundering and plunging

about up to one's waist in the nasty white stuff, when one could sit comfortably with one's back to the stove in a warm room, seemed the craziest freak ever proposed by a demented mind.

Next morning I started for Kals on foot over the bridle-path which then was the only means of reaching in three hours, when unimpeded by snow, that now famous mountaineering centre. A young giant whom the Huben *Wirth* had procured for me to carry my belongings did not mince matters, and agreed to the job only if I would break the road by going first. With snow-hoops strapped to our feet, we tackled the five or six feet deep *Neuschnee*, the preceding twenty-four hours having added another layer of 12 inches to the previous masses; and, as the lower depths had not had time to "crust," one sank down in a most heart-breaking manner up to one's thighs at every step, in spite of snow-shoes. As a faint, a very faint, foretaste of what the expedition itself would be like, this weary tramp carried its own lessons; and it showed one, too, what risks from avalanches it would be necessary to run so long as the snow remained soft and uncrusted. Twice mighty masses swept past us down the steep slopes along which the path ran, crushing big trees as if they were reeds. In fact, we were lucky that we reached Kals at all that 29th of December, for it was one of those dangerous days of the year when wise people shun steep slopes, where death might overtake one at any moment.

The hearty welcome I received at the hands—they

were gigantic paws—of the Glockner *Wirth*, though not unmixed with unmistakable shrugs of brawny shoulders when the topic nearest my heart was touched, as well as the kindly questions why I had become untrue to Kals in the past couple of seasons, and a laughing inquiry after a certain family of *Engländer*, proved that my host had not forgotten me nor the funny incident that occurred there the last time I visited the spot. One summer's day I was lying stretched out on the springy turf on the top of the Matreier Thörl, an easy col by which Kals could be reached from the region where I had been spending the previous three days chamois-stalking. Having passed three nights in haylofts, I was not a particularly clean-looking individual, my weather-stained leathern shorts where they were not patched were torn, and my knees were as brown and scarred as any young native's. The walk from Matrei to Kals by this low little pass was then already well known to tourists, so I was not surprised to see a family party, consisting of father, son, and two pretty daughters — all unmistakably British—wending their way up to where I was lying in lazy enjoyment of the beautiful view. They were carrying knapsacks and shawls, and three of the party had had evidently quite enough of their loads. What could be handier than to engage the young native sprawling in the grass to carry their belongings to Kals? For the fun of the thing, I entered upon the proposition, uttered as it was in the most execrable German ever used by a young Oxford undergraduate. As the

young man heaped knapsacks and shawls on my back, in addition to my own bulky *Rücksack*, his two pretty sisters remonstrated with him, much as if I were a dumb beast of burden; but the youth silenced them by airily assuring them that "these fellows don't feel fifteen or twenty pounds more or less on their backs." More than thirty-five years have passed since that enjoyable afternoon when I trudged at the head of the file Kalswards, but my hands still seem to itch for those two florins which the chubby-faced, good-humoured *pater familias*, on reaching the doors of this very inn, wanted to press into them with the words: "Here, my good fellow, is something for your pains." Shall I ever forget the look of blank surprise on that man's delightfully ingenuous face as he stood there with outstretched hand, when an unexpected *dénouement* suddenly divulged my identity. A London barrister suddenly greeted me with all the surprised effusiveness incidental to such encounters between friends in out-of-the-way corners of the world. It was a lifting of the curtain that mantled charming cheeks—not the father's—with rosy blushes; for had not sundry confidences been exchanged by my two pretty country-women as they trudged for hours at the heels of the "young porter," and are these unrepeatable criticisms of my personal appearance not indelibly engraved in my memory, where they have withstood for more than a generation the erasing sponge with which Father Time usually wipes from one's memory the trifling incidents of one's callow youth?

And now back to business, namely, the carrying out of my hair-brained intentions upon Austria's Matterhorn. It would take much too long to describe the ascent circumstantially. The following details will suffice to give the non-mountaineer some idea of it. My party consisted of four natives selected by me chiefly on account of their experience as chamois-hunters, a winter sport in the course of which deep snow had often to be faced. Our start was the event of the season, and most of the villagers turned out to see us leave ; and though we heard many muttered fears as to the outcome of what was considered by all a mad undertaking, there was also manifested a feeling of satisfaction, for the men from the rival village of Heiligenblut had several times in less severe winters made ineffectual attempts to reach the top of the Gross Glockner. So if we should by a happy chance succeed, it would mean glory to the men of Kals. In those days winter mountaineering was as unknown as were the now so popular winter sports that take thousands to the mountains of Switzerland and Tyrol. Thus, had ski-running been known in those days in Tyrol, a great deal of the fatigue incidental to the climb could have been avoided, for it was the wading in very deep soft snow for something like eleven hours which made the ascent such an exceptionally tiring one. The snow being just then in a dangerous condition, when a *Schneelahn*, or avalanche, can be set in motion, on such steep slopes as we were forced to traverse, by a loud shout or other unusual vibration of

the air, there was no blinking the fact that we were running considerable risks. Another danger might arise from the suddenness with which changes in the weather come about. Snowstorms are harmless enough when you have shelter near at hand, but when you are away from huts, and are exposed for hours, if not days, to the full fury of a midwinter blizzard, one is apt to have one's name added to the already long list of victims, as befell, amongst others, a party of three Viennese climbers who attempted to make a midwinter ascent of this peak many years afterwards (1893).

We left Kals on New Year's Day at 2 p.m.; our loads in the way of provisions and wood for cooking were equally shared between us five, and in the same way I took my turn in going first, by far the most fatiguing post, a change being made every quarter of an hour. In spite of snow-hoops the leader sank down almost to his middle at every step, and what that means for hours at a stretch, even when at the rear of the file, only those who have tried it can realize. With the exception of a rest and a meal we cooked at the last Alp-hut on the way up, to the door of which we had to dig our way with the shovel which we carried, we marched all night, the cold being bitter—*i.e.*, six degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

Our route was one that could not be followed in summer-time on account of the crevasses in the Kodnitz Glacier; but it saved us a great round, though the risk from avalanches was perhaps greater, the lower slopes being steeper than on the usual route. Good Peter

Groder, to whom I had given the command of the party, had twice in his life had the misfortune to be swept away by avalanches, only miracles saving him, and hence he was the most nervous of the party in respect to this danger. And his fears were not quite unfounded, for three avalanches came down that night, the first being a huge one some hundreds of yards in breadth, and some 30 or 40 feet in depth, as we saw on our way back. It thundered down an adjacent slope in unpleasant proximity to us, and Peter began to weaken, and tried to prevail upon the others to turn back. But, as I argued, turning back would not place us in safety, for it was impossible to say when the next slide would occur, and so in the end I managed to induce even Peter to go on.

At half-past six in the morning we were standing on the top of the ridge, over 11,000 feet above the sea, called the *Adler's Ruh*, leading up to the cone-shaped double peak. Soon afterwards the sun rose, and daylight disclosed an unexpected sight. Instead of finding the last bit of the climb up the cone, about 2,000 feet in altitude, a mass of soft snow such as we had been tackling all along, it was sheer ice. So little had we expected this, and so inexperienced in winter climbing were we all, that we had not provided ourselves with a single ice-axe, but were compelled to cut steps with the sharp edge of the shovel. It was a most tedious proceeding, and one that meant considerable suffering from the intense cold and from the cutting wind, the wretches in the rear of the file suffering most. The

leading man had, of course, all the exercise he desired, jabbing at the ice with the shovel, taking three chops for one with the axe.

At last also this piece of work was accomplished, and we stood on the top of the Klein Glockner, divided from the real top, which is only 100 feet higher, by the notorious *Scharte*—a saddle or knife-like edge, having on both sides a profound abyss several thousand feet in depth. Even then already it was deemed such a bad place that iron pegs had been driven, and a wire rope formed a sort of banister across this thirty or forty feet wide gap. But now nothing of this rope was visible, a thick layer of ice covering it, and so we five shivering wretches had to balance across it, the rope to which we had all been fastened since commencing the step-cutting being kept taut, and all four men securely anchoring themselves while the fifth accomplished the traverse.

Without exaggeration, it was like walking over a very giddy height upon something about as broad as a cable, a fierce half-gale blowing. Without crampons on our feet we would never have attempted it.

On the top of the Klein Glockner a curious thing happened to two of us—viz., one of the guides and me. Ordinarily the top of this crag is a mere sharp edge of rock running towards the more elevated Gross Glockner, and divided from it by the aforementioned *Scharte*. Instead of this we found a broad platform 50 or 60 feet in length, and from 12 to 16 feet wide. Being anxious to look down at Heiligenblut, the rival village lying

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on the northern foot of the great peak, and from where I knew many a pair of eyes would be watching the peak to see whether our attempt would succeed, I and the guide stepped towards the edge of the platform. Sticking my *Bergstock* into the snow to rest my telescope against it, and using some force in doing so, it penetrated further than I expected, and would have slipped through had I not held it firmly. On withdrawing it and looking down through the hole, I saw, some 4,000 feet below me, the Pasterzen Glacier. The guide and I had been standing for some minutes on a shelf or cornice of snow which the wintry gales had drifted against the northern face of the stupendous precipice.

It was a miracle that this shelf, not thicker, perhaps, than 3 feet where it joined the rock, should have withstood our double weight. With blanched cheeks we jumped back when we realized how excessively careless we had been, for, of course, there was really no excuse, the configuration of the spot being so well known to all of us.

A few minutes before ten o'clock in the forenoon of January 2, 1875, we five mortals were standing on the top of Austria's Matterhorn, where no mortal foot had ever rested before at this season of the year. The four natives were as pleased as I was at our success, and piously offered up a prayer with bared heads, an otherwise unusual proceeding.

Of the view and of other details it is unnecessary to speak; the sight that pleased and interested my com-

panions most was the group of black specks standing in front of the church of Heiligenblut, lying as it were at our feet, needing but one gigantic leap of some 8,000 or 9,000 feet to reach. Our improvised flag had evidently been seen, and thus all doubts about our success would be removed.

Our descent was accomplished in double-quick time, but, as I look back, knowing what a man on skis can do, I am sure that we would have reached Kals, instead of at four o'clock, some hours earlier, had we been provided with them, for the lower slopes are quite ideal ski-slopes. As it was, we were all eminently satisfied with ourselves, and if in the last thirty years this winter trip has been performed several times, and even a lady has accomplished it, it shows how even the most impossible-looking feats are rendered easy by experience and by novel means of progression, as well as by the presence of shelter-huts.

It is rather a curious coincidence that the worst of the many accidents on the Gross Glockner, which cost as many lives as fell victim in the notorious first-ascent fatality on the Matterhorn, occurred within 100 feet or so of the spot which nearly proved fatal to me. It was caused, it is almost certain, by the same momentary carelessness that so nearly made us two mortals take that ghastly 4,000 foot dive; for though it occurred on the occasion of a summer ascent (1886), violent snowstorms will even in August form those snow-cornices. Or, possibly, the one on which the Marquis of Pallavicini, one of Austria's most experienced

mountaineers, and his guides stepped that fatal day was an old snow-shelf left from the previous winter. Anyhow, it broke under them, and five shockingly mangled bodies were left as a mute warning against one of the most dangerous death-traps of the Alps. Accidents from this cause most frequently happen in the case of guideless climbing, though, as both instances show, even the most experienced guides will occasionally, in the excitement of the moment, forget quite elementary precautions. Pallavicini's tragic fate was a particularly sad one, family circumstances surrounding it with unusually dramatic features.

CHAPTER XI

FROM BOZEN TO MERAN AND THE VINTSCHGAU

Bozen—occasionally one finds it spelt Botzen—is a most picturesquely situated town, full of colour, life, and old art. It bursts upon one with enhanced effect after suddenly leaving the gloomy twenty-mile-long gorge down which we have glided since leaving Brixen and Klausen, the grating brakes indicating the steepness of the grade, a circumstance amply confirmed by the rushing Eisack dashing angrily against the railway embankment.

Mountains of moderate height surround the town on all sides, their circumvallating masses being broken at three points, where deep incisions to the level of the town mark the places where rivers have broken through. Through one of these incisions we emerge, and where we do so stood once upon a time the famous *Pons Drusi*, the bridge that marked the victory of Augustus' stepson over the *Breuni* and *Genaunes*, two of the Rhætian tribes located on the southern slopes of the Brenner. They fought so fiercely that the stream at our side ran red with the blood of the slain, while

the women, when other missiles failed, threw their own children into the faces of the Roman soldiers.

And as if to remind subsequent generations of the sanguinary deeds done at this spot on more than one memorable occasion, Nature has been remarkably free with her reds hereabouts. The porphyry cliffs that form the gorge are of that hue, the clay of which the tiles covering the houses are made burns to a tinge of that colour that harmonizes excellently with the whole landscape, which, when seen in autumn, is one mass of browny reds, very lovely to behold. But the most gorgeous display of red that Nature vouchsafes to exhibit is at dusk and dawn, when she lights up the grandest beacon possessed by any town. Through a wide gap in the circle of hills surrounding Bozen there looks down upon it a group of Dolomites, consisting of a cyclopean wall of serrated pinnacles, called collectively the *Rosengarten*. This "Garden of Roses" at ordinary times has nothing very special about it, considering it is one of those Dolomite peaks of which we have already had so much to say in the previous chapter. Situated due east of the town, it is especially favourably placed to catch the glorious afterglow in the evening and the first rosy rays of the rising sun, the latter more particularly in winter, when the orb rises in a rather more southerly direction.

Watched from some point west of the town of Bozen, say the walk along the formidable walls that dam in the usually so harmless-looking Talfer stream, or from the promenades above Gries, a health-resort on the western

bank of that watercourse, the afterglow on the *Rosengarten* is a sight that, once witnessed, will never be forgotten.

The climate of Bozen is already somewhat Italian in its summer heat, so this district should not be visited, if it can be avoided, in the dog-days, when all who can manage it fly from broiling Bozen, to seek the cooler atmosphere of the foot-hill plateaux, or *Mittelgebirg*. Among the favourite summer resorts to which the prosperous Bozner merchants and officials—and they all seem to be prosperous and eminently satisfied with life—flock in their hundreds is the Ritten, a lofty, undulating plateau about 3,000 feet above the sweltering town. Up to a year ago one could reach this promised land only on foot or on horseback, for no vehicle with springs could possibly negotiate the path that led up to it. Paved with huge porphyry blocks, with broad crevasses between them, placed *in situ* as much by Nature as by man, at a church-roof angle, the only vehicle that was able to ascend this precipitous ladder of a path was a sort of hybrid sledge-cart. It had two front-wheels, no springs, and instead of the hind-wheels two stout beams of wood dragged along the ground. It went only at a walking pace, and looked so antediluvian that even the Romans must have smiled when they saw it dragged up by two patient-looking bullocks. But they evidently must have found it so well adapted to the needs of those fearful paths that it was left to the twentieth century to introduce improvements. And this was done, as in so

many other details of domestic life in Tyrol, by going at once to the other extreme—namely, by skipping all intermediate stages and superseding contrivances that were in use 2,000 years ago by the newest of the new. The electric mountain railway that climbs up to the Ritten to-day so smoothly is but one instance of many illustrating how ancient customs are pushed back by our modernity. As strikingly is this shown by the "new light," as the peasant calls the product of the scores upon scores of small electric works constructed on the cheapest and most primitive, but yet quite effective, manner, which furnish light to peasants' houses that up to yesterday knew only the flare of the pitch-wood torch or the dim flame produced by a wick of twisted cotton in a pan of tallow. In these places people had never heard of gas, and sometimes not even of petroleum, so that with one bound conditions of life that had prevailed before Christ was born have been replaced by the most up-to-date innovations.

Bozen, which is a town of some 15,000 inhabitants, reminds one also in other respects than its summer heat of the neighbourhood of Italy, or at least of that part of Tyrol where Italian is almost exclusively spoken. It is still quite a German town in sentiment and politics, but as one walks along its streets the softer Southern language is often heard, particularly when the labouring element is about, for practically all the stonemasons, bricklayers, navvies, and hucksters are Italian, if not by nationality, at any rate by language. The *Sprachgrenze*, as is called the impalpable frontier-line

between the German and the Italian languages, has now moved somewhat farther north than it was in ancient days, when Salurn, rather more than half-way between Bozen and Trent, was the point where ran the old boundary between the Teuton and the Longobard realms. There, the legend has it, Antori, the Teuton husband of Theolinde, Queen of the Longobards, whose crown and goblet are still preserved at Monza, struck his war-axe with such enormous force into a wayside tree to mark the boundary, that none of the Longobards present could remove it. It appears to be a fact that the Italian language is still gradually creeping towards the foot of the Brenner. By the German-speaking Tyrolese this is considered to constitute a great danger to their intellectual supremacy in the threatened districts, but whether this is a real or a fancied danger is a delicate question upon which nobody not thoroughly acquainted with South Tyrol and its three antagonistic parties (German, Italian, and clerical) should venture to offer an opinion.

There is a profusion of nice walks amid novel and truly beautiful scenery round Bozen, and the archæologist can visit a great number of interesting castles and churches, some in ruins, others in semi-habitable condition, Schloss Runkelstein, with its quaint fourteenth-century frescoes, being perhaps the one that should least be missed.

At times Bozen is very crowded. Some 80,000 tourists are known to have visited it last year.

I mentioned elsewhere that three valleys meet at

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Bozen, forming in this way three gaps in the circle of hills surrounding this ancient town. Where and why they meet a glance at a map will show much better than can any description in print. The one which we have to follow up first is the one formed by the main Adige. It is by no means a turbulent-looking stream in its new artificial bed, for the havoc wrought by it of old in its "unregulated" days was so great, and the land it overflowed and destroyed so valuable, that at last the poor little exchequer of Tyrol, assisted by the adjoining villages and towns, had to face the financial music, and to bed it in a straight canal-like channel where it no longer can do any harm.

On the bank of this eighteen-mile-long canal runs the branch line connecting Bozen with Meran, which is our next goal. It is a lovely journey, the beauties of which escape one if one remains boxed up in the carriages. You are travelling through a valley where literally every rocky prominence is crowned by an old castle or church, of which, alas! in most instances only roofless ruins are left. Of the former, the ancient seats of the nobility, there were several kinds, different periods producing different types. The oldest and most picturesque were those erected on prominent crags, where Nature assisted in making them impregnable retreats, the natural advantages of which had in most cases already been discovered by the Romans. Of these there are a number in this storied valley, and, unlike those instances of unfortunate restoration only too frequent in French Châteaux-land or on the

Rhine, these grey walls have, as a rule, remained untouched by man's renovating hand. They are as they always were since their evacuation centuries ago, and there are few spots in the world where the archæologist has his subject-matter so profusely and so handily presented to him as just here.

Another type, less ancient, but still dating back to days anterior to the discovery of America, are the castles erected in the fifteenth century, when the growing prosperity of the whole country led its aristocracy to build up more elaborate and roomy strongholds. A third class were the most modern of all, the *Herrenhäuser*, or, as one might call them, the mansions of the gentry, built mostly in the sixteenth century, when gunpowder had come into general use, and had demonstrated that no walls however stout, no crag however high, could withstand its power. Of these mansions there were a great number, the majority of the 1,250 seats of the nobility in Tyrol consisting of *Herrenhäuser* that owed their existence to the more or less sudden accumulation of wealth in consequence of the silver and copper mines, and the growth of commerce during the reigns of Maximilian and Charles V. It was during this period, 350 or 400 years ago, that Tyrol reached its zenith, and it was in the country round Bozen and Meran where these "new men" settled down, acquiring minor degrees of nobility by means as well known then as they are now. In those happy days the scriveners of patents of nobility and the illuminators of armorial bearings were kept busy to an

extent unknown until then. Most of the *Herrenhäuser* have either fallen into decay or have reverted to humbler purposes as peasants' dwellings; not a few of the sturdy descendants of these erstwhile silver-kings and commercial magnates, when in the course of time wealth disappeared, dropped their "von" and became honest tillers of the soil, taking greater pride in the perfection of their vineyards and orchards than in the upkeep of their pedigrees.

The country round Meran enjoys a reputation as well as a name peculiar to itself—*i.e.*, the *Burggrafen Amt*—whose inhabitants, the Burggräfler, as became the dwellers in a district so extraordinarily favoured by Nature, knew how to enjoy life. Their reputation as their own vineyards' best customers and as gourmands was one not undeserved by these bucolic bon-vivants, but one must not forget that it was a reputation rather easily gained in such a strikingly frugal country as is Tyrol, taken as a whole.

The national costumes of the inhabitants of the various valleys that converge towards Bozen and Meran are the most striking and picturesque in the whole country, and, however curious some of the articles of dress when described in print must appear to those who have never seen them in life, there can be no question that man and woman, particularly the former, look as if they were born to them by right of a long line of ancestors, going back to the age of the Crusades. For surely only an inherited dignity could enable humble peasant-folk to wear, with such unconscious

grace, a costume the shape, material, and colour of which are eminently trying to an ordinary human being. But on these broad-shouldered, spare frames the scarlet waistcoat, broad green suspenders, and huge leathern belts, embroidered with fanciful designs, if not with the name of the owner's great-grandfather—for these articles of dress are of such substantial make that they can well serve as the Sunday-best for three or four generations—hang with inimitable dignity, and the huge green cartwheel of a hat worn by the Passeier peasant, or the conical brown felt, becorded and betasselled, sported by the Meraner, shade clean-shaven, sharp-featured, eagle-eyed faces the like of which you will see nowhere else in a peasant population. And even clad in their everyday working dress, these hidalgos of the Alps, as they stride up their steep paths with the long, slow step of the mountaineer, exhibit an imperturbable calmness of demeanour that at once shows how unconscious of, and untouched by, the rush and scurry of modernity they have remained.

Meran was in the old days, up to the year 1421, the capital of the country, and there are two buildings that recall to us its ancient glory. The first is the tiny palace, or *Burg*, hidden away in one of the old streets, so that it is quite difficult to find. But it is well worth the trouble to discover it, for it is, in its way, the *Hôtel Cluny* of Tyrol, and a visit to it helps to illustrate the simpleness of life 400 or 500 years ago. It received its present shape under Sigismund, first Duke, afterwards Archduke, of Tyrol,

the wooer of Scotland's fair Princess, Eleanor, daughter of James I. Of Sigismund's gay Court and loose morals we have already heard. How in this diminutive town-house, smaller than many a fifty-pound suburban villa, even a tenth part of the Duchess's Court, which consisted of fifty noble ladies-in-waiting, could have found room, is one of the puzzles which can be solved only by remembering the primitive manner in which even the greatest personages used to live, how the inmates herded together in chilly chambers that could not be heated and had stone floors, and where all the domestic arrangements were of the most cramped nature and the few existing pieces of furniture of the most primitive construction. In such places all considerations for comfort had to give way to the one essential—safety against attack. This safety could be gained in ordinary castles only by crowding together in prison-like cells behind thick and well-guarded walls. Even here in this town-house of the country's Sovereign, which was situated in the heart of the strongly fortified *Hauptstadt*, high, crenellated walls circumvented the dwelling. A well-protected gateway with a tiny porch, enabling only one person at a time to enter the little courtyard, gave ingress to it. On the walls in the chief living-room, as well as on those of the adjoining principal bedroom, is still the beautiful time-stained Gothic panelling ; while over the quaintly arched doorway between the two main rooms are magnificently carved armorial bearings, one showing the Scotch, the other the Habsburg coat.

Here in these chambers the Duchess Eleanor, whose literary talents and love of sport, no less than her kindly nature, won her fame and her subjects' devotion, lived for nearly thirty-two years, and probably also wrote her books. And though her life cannot have been free of sorrow, on account of her husband's amours, she seems to have made the best of the situation, and certainly made a model Duchess. Sigismund mourned her death (1480) sincerely, and though for reasons of State it was most important that a legitimate heir should be forthcoming—their only offspring had died in infancy—he remained a widower for four years.

How it came about that Tyrol's Sovereign wedded a Scotch Princess, unfolds a typical bit of medieval life, for in those days, when communication with such a distant and practically unknown land as was Scotland, where a strange tongue was spoken, was a matter of very considerable difficulty, only special circumstances could have brought about the union. In spite of the fact that the records of Scotland, as well as those of Tyrol, are curiously silent concerning the marriage, and one even does not know for certain where the wedding occurred, though Innsbruck lays claim to the honour, it is fairly certain that Aenas Silvius' adventurous journey to Scotland some time previously brought about this singular union.* This crafty

* It is almost certain that Duke Sigismund did not personally visit Scotland previous to his marriage, which was arranged by three Tyrolese noblemen who visited James II.'s Court at Dunbar. In the year following his own marriage (1448), he probably

Churchman and licentious courtier, who ultimately reached the goal of his ambition as Pope Pius II., had been Sigismund's tutor in the latter part of his minority at the Court of Vienna. His amusing account of his shipwreck and his roundabout journey to the "wilds north of the Tweed," in which he gives a piquant description of the charms of Scotch lassies, and at the same time throws such curious lights upon the primitive manners and lack of luxuries, causing him to remark that the humblest citizen of Augsburg seemed to him to be better lodged and clothed than was the Scotch King, appears to have inflamed Sigismund's heart. But one would like to hear more about the ways and means employed to bring about this match, and of Princess Eleanor's "first impressions" of her future home, and of her journey thither, about which absolutely nothing is known. The fact that her Meran home is to-day in much the same condition in which it was when she lived in its confined chambers and trod the cramped little staircase and passages, only tends to increase our curiosity.

The other place of interest that no visitor to Meran should fail to visit is the castle, which for centuries was the chief place of residence of the country's Sovereign—viz., Schloss Tyrol. It not only gave its name to the

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accompanied Mary of Guelders to Scotland, for he is mentioned as one of James II.'s brothers-in-law who were present at the great tournaments and festivities which were held in Stirling in celebration of James II.'s union with Princess Mary. See *The Land in the Mountains* for further details.

whole country, but of it was said with perfect truth that only he who held this stronghold could claim to be lord of the country. In Roman times *Teriolis* was the head-quarters of the third Italian legion, and, as we know from the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the commander of this post had at that time—about A.D. 400—to guard the road by which the supplies were sent northwards to Rome's armies. *Teriolis* was probably completely destroyed during the *Völkerwanderung*, when Tyrol, as a land of passage, suffered more than most other countries from the chaotic incursions of wild hordes. The first documentary appearance of Meran occurred A.D. 857, and it probably took the place of the somewhat legendary *Maja*, and from it in course of time was devolved *Mairana*.

The position of Schloss Tyrol is a commanding one, for it occupies a projecting promontory of the steeply rising mountains, and from its elevation of 1,100 feet over the town, not only the cup in the mountains where the latter lies snugly ensconced, but also the main valley, which here makes a great bend, as well as the Passeierthal, can be overlooked as from an eyrie.

Some very striking events and scenes occurred in this venerable stronghold, more particularly in the reigns of the pleasure-loving King Henry of Tyrol,* and of his somewhat notorious daughter, "Pocket-mouthed Meg," who, after her father's demise, began

* His title of King was derived from the fact that as son-in-law of the King of Bohemia he was elected to be the latter's successor, but had to fly the country before he was crowned.

TRENT

her career as Duchess of Tyrol in her own right, by chasing her spouse, the incapable Prince John of Bohemia, from Schloss Tyrol. This she did one November afternoon in the year 1340, as he was returning from a hunting expedition. During his absence his Bohemian attendants were ignominiously driven from the castle, and on his arrival in front of the drawbridge he found it up, and the gate securely barred ; his Duchess's orders to inform him that he had better follow his Bohemians, as he was no longer wanted in Tyrol, being carried out very literally by her castle guards, with whom, as with the rest of the people, the foreign interlopers were no favourites. A year or so later Duchess Margaret was wedded in this castle to a more suitable bridegroom, the stalwart Prince Louis, son of the Emperor of Germany of the same name. But it was a ceremony that had to be performed under peculiar circumstances, for the Church took no lenient view of the unceremonious manner in which the Duchess had severed her nuptial ties with a Prince to whom the Pope had extended his special favours. The great ban of Rome was pronounced upon the fair culprit, and the Emperor of Germany's search for an ecclesiast of standing to perform the marriage ceremony was no easy one ; for, of course, such an act in the face of the Church's most solemn interdict would surely be visited with dire consequences. At last he succeeded in finding a willing tool in the person of the Bishop of Freisingen, who consented to annul the previous ties and bind the fresh nuptial knot.

Accompanied by him, the Emperor with a vast train set out for Meran, to reach which he had to cross the Brenner in the depth of winter. But lo! as if God's hand was at work, the daring Bishop's horse, while crossing the snowy mountains, made a fatal slip, killing the Church lord on the spot. The utmost consternation reigned among the assembled Princes and dignitaries, who, superstitious as every one was in those dark days, saw in it a punitive visitation of Heaven, and the two other Bishops in the Imperial train refused altogether to have anything to do with the marriage. As a consequence the Emperor and his vast suite of Princes and minor lords arrived in Meran destitute of the means of uniting the couple. At last an humble local ecclesiast was found who consented to perform the ceremony on condition that all sacred vessels and holy emblems should first be removed from the chapel.

How many adventures the love-thirsty Duchess Margaret passed through in Schloss Tyrol history fails to relate, but, to judge by the number of half-legendary, half-historical stories that have busied the country-side for nigh upon five and a half centuries, her notoriety was not undeserved. Though, possibly, had she not been the last of the old line of the Counts of Tyrol, and the Princess who linked Tyrol to the realm of the Habsburgs (1363) with ties that time has proved to be indissoluble, her piquant misdeeds would have been long forgotten.

Another interesting scene in Schloss Tyrol must have been the meeting of two boon companions in 1414,

when Pope John XXIII. conferred with the country's Sovereign, Duke Frederick with the Empty Purse, prior to the great Council of Constance. History, or rather the lack of it, has left many gaps in the relationship that existed between these two men, but we know what dire results for the country were brought about by this singular friendship that very nearly cost the Duke his life and his throne.

Schloss Tyrol, or, rather, what remained of it by the time the great wars of the late Middle Ages, conflagrations, earthquakes, and landslips, had done their worse, was left a mere shell; and when the Bavarian allies of Napoleon I. received the greater part of Tyrol as a reward for the blood so lavishly spent in its conquest, the Government of that country put upon it the last indignity by selling Schloss Tyrol for less than £200 at public auction, and the house-breakers were actually beginning their work of wrecking the place for the sake of the stones and old iron, when a few public-minded persons scraped together the necessary funds to save the historic pile. It is now the property of the town of Meran, and under the patronage of the Emperor and some art-loving Austrians—amongst whom the head of the Innsbruck Museum, Court Councillor von Wieser and Count Wilczek, himself owner of the famous castle of Kreuzenstein, near Vienna, may be specially mentioned—it is being gradually restored.*

* The sculptures on the hall and chapel doorways are world-famous, and the chapel itself of high archæological interest.

Some of the earlier efforts at restoration, made before the above-mentioned connoisseurs came upon the scene, were not entirely happy, but these are now being removed.

The view from the windows of the great *Rittersaal*, or central hall, is one of the grandest imaginable, and I doubt if there is anywhere an edifice of this sort from where, by a simple turn of one's head, one's eyes can range from a typical vineyard-clad Southern landscape, with all the beautifully varied types of vegetation that surround the prosperous town of Meran, to the austere magnificence of a truly Alpine scene—glittering glaciers, vast woods of dark pines, and great expanses of eternal snow.

One walk which the visitor to Meran should not fail to take is to the Zenoburg, at the entrance of the Passeier Valley, which for historical interest is second only to Schloss Tyrol. To the antiquarian the roughly hewn stone eagle in the arch of the chapel door, no less than the exceedingly curious sculptures, are of considerable interest ; the former is the oldest existing representation of the country's symbol, concerning the origin of which much ink has been spilt.

The Passeier Valley, to which the Zenoburg acted in olden days as defensive gateway, heads straight for the Stubaier glacier peaks, the northern slopes of which look down on the Innthal. Its chief interest is its peasantry, and the fact that the great national hero, Andreas Hofer, was born there (1767), and, following his father's footsteps as innkeeper, lived there till the

Emperor's call to arms made of the simple peasant a leader of men, who defeated Napoleon's most tried generals. His memory is kept green throughout the country, and Meran has of late taken to producing plays in which self-taught peasant actors manage to bring the principal scenes of the country's heroic resistance vividly before the onlooker. These performances are altogether of a very realistic nature, showing the inherent histrionic talent of the people, and are deservedly most popular among the crowd of Meran's international visitors.

If we now bid good-bye to beautiful Meran and its environs, casting a last glance at its fine parish church, proud of the distinction of being the tallest steeple in all Tyrol, and pursue the Adige up the deep trough it has cut for itself, so as to reach the Vintschgau, we almost immediately face quite different climatic conditions. The step from the lower floor of the valley near Meran to the higher ground which separates the Meran country from the Vintschgau is but 600 feet in altitude, but it is sufficient to cause an extraordinary difference in climate, vegetation and landscape. This rapid change has already been hinted at when describing the view from Schloss Tyrol, which, though we have ascended the step, we still see proudly towering over Meran.

For many years Meran was the head of the branch railway from Bozen, but lately a continuation into the Vintschgau has been constructed, the final goal of which will be to connect not only with the Engadine,

but also with the Upper Inn Valley, the junction with the Arlberg line being intended to take place at or near Landeck. At present it stops short at Mals, not far from the Reschen Scheideck watershed. By this line the approach to the Ortler region and to the Stelvio Pass over to Italy* is much facilitated. But not only is the communication to this interesting corner of Tyrol rendered much easier, but the traveller will also find vast improvements in the arrangements for his creature comforts. Thus, the beautifully situated Trafoi Hotel (5,266 feet†) is in every respect a first-class house of good cheer, while the equally picturesquely situated Sulden Hotel, at the foot of the Ortler, at an altitude of 6,200 feet, is as good a centre for mountain expeditions as one can desire.

Those who remember the exceedingly primitive accommodation at Sulden, when one was glad to be allowed to creep into a hayloft, and the fare one received in the tiny and then extraordinarily isolated hamlet of St. Gertraud was bread that was baked but twice a year, with a bit of cheese, can realize the contrast afforded by the luxuries obtainable in the two last-named well-appointed caravansaries.

* The Stelvio Pass is the highest passage over the Alps for vehicles, the height of the traverse being over 9,000 feet above the sea-level. As a consequence it is passable only from the middle of June to the end of September.

† Baedeker (1907) gives the height as 5,950 feet, but this is, I believe, wrong.

CHAPTER XII

IN THE ITALIAN-SPEAKING TYROL

RETURNING to Bozen, from which we started to visit Meran and the Vintschgau, and resuming our journey southwards along the broad Valley of the Adige, we see on our right, soon after leaving Bozen, the stately old ruins of Sigmundskron, which in its day, when our friend the amorous husband of Duchess Eleanor rebuilt it, could boast of being the largest stronghold in Tyrol. Its commanding position on a rock overlooking the confluence of the Eisack, Talfer and the Adige needs hardly the further confirmatory evidence, in the shape of Roman remains discovered there, to prove that its origin goes back to the days when *Pons Drusi* was one of the strategically important places in the newly-conquered province of *Rhætia*.

Behind Sigmundskron we see the Mendel, a range of mountains, or rather hills, of somewhat disappointing appearance, but over which a highroad and funicular railway leads to the upper reaches of one of the most important lateral valleys of South Tyrol—namely, the Nonsberg, the mouth of which is much farther down

towards Trent. A few years ago the enterprising citizens of Bozen initiated the construction of a mountain railway up to the top of this low pass, and as in this country not even funiculars have the heart to scale mountains without having a *Restauration* to greet it at the top, a good hotel now welcomes visitors on the Mendel Pass. From it some extraordinarily fine and varied views from the icy pinnacle of the Ortler to the serrated row of Dolomite peaks up and down the wonderfully luxuriant Adige Valley can be enjoyed. To the abstemious the information will be of little interest, that the country at his feet consists of some of the best wine country of this part of the world.

Our Adige Valley train, continuing to pass through miles upon miles of vineyards, all showing the peculiar Tyrolese manner of growing the vine on trellises, brings us shortly to Salurn, to which we have already alluded as marking the boundary between the German and the Italian tongue. Though we continue to remain in Tyrol for more than forty miles more, till the real frontier between Austria and Italy at Ala is reached, we here bid good-bye to the Teuton element. The houses assume that poverty-stricken, dishevelled appearance usually associated with Italy; whining beggars, of whom one is quite free in the German-speaking part of Tyrol, begin to pester one in the towns and on the highroads; and the mountains forming the valley assume a sterile, thirsty look, betraying the lack of water and the parching heat of summer.

The next station after Salurn is S. Michele, where the Nonsberg, that valley upon which we looked from the top of the Mendel, joins the main valley. A massive, rocky corner pillar, towering up to a formidable height, marks the point where this occurs. Here this valley is no longer called by its German name—Nonsberg—but Val di Non, its uppermost reaches assuming, again, a third name—viz., Val di Sole. The latter heads up at the foot of the Cevedale and Adamello.

In one of its branch valleys, at an elevation of 5,000 feet, a new first-class hotel, on a pleasantly situated upland expanse of meadow and fir-woods, invites exploration. It is Madonna di Campiglio, from which the fine dolomite peaks of the Brenta, Presanella and Adamello groups can most easily be visited. Madonna di Campiglio can be reached from three points—from Trent or Riva, via Tione ; from the main line in the Adige Valley, leaving it at S. Michele; and lastly, and most conveniently, from the Mendel Pass, the distance from that place being about forty miles, and the round trip can be made during the season in a day by using the four-horsed stage-coach.

The orographical features of South Tyrol are often most puzzling, streams changing not only their own name, but also that of the valleys which they form, three or four times ; and as they bend and twist about, leaping down huge steps which usually mark the change of name, in the most unexpected manner, only a personal acquaintance with this part of the country can enable one to form a clear picture.

With a few exceptions, these districts lying east and west of the Adige Valley south of Salurn—*i.e.*, in the Italian-speaking part of Tyrol—have very poor inns; and while the scenery is often very grand, it has about it a melancholy look of desertedness and barrenness contrasting in a most striking manner with the attractive cheerfulness of the scenery north of the Italian sphere. With a few exceptions, the peasantry lack that free and sturdy appearance so common in North Tyrol, and as a consequence of the absence of all restraint upon marriages, such as we have heard is exercised in the German part of Tyrol by the communes, the population far exceeds the resources of the country. Hence in spring the majority of the able-bodied natives emigrate to seek work elsewhere over summer. Thousands get as far as Germany and France, and some go even further afield. In the autumn they come back with enough savings to keep them over the winter.

Land tenure is also different in the Italian-speaking parts of Tyrol to that which prevails in North Tyrol. While it would be an exaggeration to say that the lot of the South Tyrolese is as bad as that of the Italian rural *poverissimo*, than which no more wretched existence can be imagined in civilized Europe, their condition does approach that of the latter. Not only are peasant properties, where land is held as freehold, divided up into infinitesimal parts among a swarm of children, but that oppressive Italian system of land bondage represented by *signori* and *coloni* is widely prevalent. The latter are really farm-labourers who,

RIVA AND ARCO.

instead of being paid wages, receive their remuneration by sharing the crops ; hence in bad years they become pauperized, the *signori* generally proving most exacting landlords. This condition of things is plainly reflected by the poverty-stricken looks of the people, particularly in the silk-growing districts, as well as by the dishevelled appearance of the houses and villages.

After leaving S. Michele and the Nonsberg Valley, the next place of any importance at which our train stops is Trent, the largest of South Tyrolese towns, and one of high importance to the art-lover and antiquary. Quite Italian in appearance, it has some of the usual charms as well as drawbacks of Italian towns, and the fact that the Austrian uniform is a good deal in evidence there will remind the veteran traveller of old days when Austria's soldiers, then a white-coated force, were a familiar sight throughout the whole of North Italy from Venice to Milan.

Trent is a very ancient settlement, and has undoubtedly the honour of being the oldest town in Tyrol. The *Rhætians*, and possibly even some preceding prehistoric people, dwelt there in numbers. It is first mentioned in the war between Rome and the Cimbrii, for the latter, when advancing upon Italy in 102 B.C., came hereabouts upon the legions commanded by Quintus Lutatius Catulus ; and when in turn Rome's troops moved northwards to conquer *Rhætia*, they found a fortified settlement at the base of that curious rock that towers up opposite the town, the Doss Trento or the Wart. That in this part of the country

Roman supremacy was speedily acknowledged is shown by the fact that already in A.D. 56, or some seventy years after the conquest, Trent is spoken of as a "splendidum municipium." From Rangis we learn that the walled Roman town formed a square 200 yards by 100 yards, with a tower at each corner and with a fortified camp. There was also a castle called *Verruca*, or the Wart, on the top of the 950 feet high Doss Trento. This rock is now crowned by fortifications that command the whole valley, and has seen a deal of fighting in its day. Of the ancient fortificatory works of Trent many traces are left—perhaps the most interesting being the Torre Vanga, a forbidding-looking tower built A.D. 1212 by the famous Bishop Wanga, the compiler of Tyrol's oldest codex of statutes. Of the many important personages who made the acquaintance of the fearsome prisons in this tower, the most notorious was Prince Bishop Georg of Lichtenstein, who seems to have fared particularly badly: for first of all his own people threw him into these dungeons for his appalling deeds of oppression; and then, when Duke Frederick of Tyrol came to his aid and released him, he was incarcerated by the latter in the Castle of Brunneck, a place that enjoyed an even worse reputation, as the Duke had discovered that the Bishop was contemplating a treacherous delivery of his whole principality to Venice. What wonder that he never saw Trent again!

Many important archæological finds have been made in and near Trent. Thus, at Civezzano Tyrol's foremost archæologist, Court Councillor von Wieser, dis-

covered the grave of one of the Longobard Kings. It contained the complete iron fittings of a huge coffin (now reconstructed in the Innsbruck Museum), arms —*i.e.*, *spata*, *scramasax*, and lancehead—a very fine shield buckle of gilt bronze, as well as a gold cross adorned with the peculiar twisted "pigtail" designs of the sixth century. The corpse, if it anywhere near filled the coffin, must have been that of a veritable giant.

Trent presents itself to the twentieth-century visitor as a stately town of nearly 30,000 inhabitants; the main streets are wide, and some very fine old buildings betray in an unmistakable manner the importance of the place in mediæval times, its zenith being reached in the sixteenth century. According to Goethe's crabbing remark, there was only one palace built in a good style in Trent—the Palazzo Zambelli; but in this the great man did grievous injustice to the town, for there are a number of fine old mansions in Trent. The most remarkable building of all is the cathedral, about which a few words must be said, as it is of high archæological interest. Christianity must have reached this part of Tyrol at a very early period, for we know that St. Vigilius, who was appointed A.D. 385 to the See of Trent, was the third Bishop of the place. When the peasants of the Redena Valley killed him, his corpse was brought to Trent and was buried in a church, or rather chapel, which the dead Bishop had enlarged, and which occupied the site of a Roman temple dedicated to Saturn. According to celebrated experts, the five

carved red marble stones to be seen to this day walled in beneath the windows in the north façade are the remains of the heathen temple, while the original walls of St. Vigilius' chapel are plainly visible in the aisle underneath these windows. Its present shape as a Romanesque basilica with three aisles it received during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Bishop Udalrich (1002-1055) commencing the present building. The open mural stairs, the windows of the crypt, and a great part of the north façade, date from this early period. Of the later alterations it is not necessary to speak here, the seal of Venetian Gothic being patently impressed upon the building.

The celebrated Council of Trent was opened in the cathedral (December 13, 1545), but it sat in the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, a red marble edifice; and here too, after sitting eighteen years, the famous scene took place when Cardinal Francis of Lorraine uttered the final imprecation, "Cursed be the heretics!" a malediction repeated with thundering voices by the hundreds of Church lords assembled on that solemn occasion. It was a curse which completed the final breach between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches.*

Trent was the scene of unprecedented festivities while the Council was assembled, the countless followers of the Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops, of which there were no fewer than 268, as well as Ambassadors from all the principal Courts, more than

* Zanella, 'S. Maria Maggiore,' Trento, 1879.

filled the town, so that a small city of tents and other temporary structures rose outside the town walls.

The famous organ which once graced the Church of S. Maria Maggiore was destroyed by lightning, and, according to a popular legend, the man who built it had his eyes torn out by red-hot irons, in order that he could build no similar masterpiece for any other town, and that for this reason Divine vengeance wrecked the celebrated instrument. Many of the palaces of Trent that were filled with gay crowds during the memorable period are now sadly neglected, and put to uses humiliating to the ancient noble families that once lived in them. The once very famous residence of the Prince-Bishops of Trent, the *Castello del Buon Consiglio*, is now (since 1811) a military barrack, whitewash covering many of the superb frescoes on the walls. This cruel disfigurement is, however, not worse than that which overtook some of these mediæval wall decorations at the time of the Council, for we are told that in view of the advent of the Church lords all the nude figures were ordered to be painted over.* When this was reported to the gay ladies who came to Trent in the train of some of the great dignitaries, they insisted on having the disguising paint washed off, thus restoring these masterpieces to their original condition, to the amusement of their none too strait-laced protectors.

Another palace—the Palazzo Pretorio—has in recent

* It was the painter Daniele da Voltera who was ordered to cover up the nudities.

times been filled with not very clean-looking offices, while the Palazzo Zambelli, also called Galasso, built by a splendour-loving Augsburg mining king, George Fugger, in the style of Palladio, has now been turned into a savings bank ; while others—such as the *Palazzo Cazzuffi*, adorned by frescoes of Gamabara of Brescia ; the *Palazzo Salvadori*, with its fine chapel ; the *Palazzo Tabarelli*, built in the style of Bramantes ; the *Casa Clotz*, with famous frescoes by Brusasorci—are turned into municipal offices, hotels, lodging-houses, and one is actually used as a storehouse for faked "old" furniture by a dealer in antiquities. There the names of Trent's old families are taken in vain when a greenhorn enters the place, and is made to believe that he is buying antique furniture used hundreds of years ago in this very building.*

At one period in the sixteenth century the Sees of Trent and Brixen were united in the person of one Bishop, the forceful Bernard of Cles, a clever politician, polished courtier, and withal one of the most noteworthy art-collectors of the Renaissance.

He was followed by four Bishops, all members of one family, that of the knights of Madruz. These nobles, nephew following uncle, retained the see for no less than 119 years. The last Bishop of that ilk,

* In the *Casa Geremia* Maximilian lived during his stay in Trent when *en route* to Rome to have himself crowned. On finding that the Venetians had blocked all the passes to Italy, he caused himself to be crowned in the cathedral by the Papal Legate Tusculanus, a ceremony which was really *ultra vires*.

Charles Emanuel, was the hero of a romantic love affair which ended in a tragedy. He had won the love of the beautiful Claudia Porticella, the daughter of a Trent patrician family. In vain he sought the Pope's permission to make her his wife, and not receiving the required sanction, he lived with her in open defiance of Papal wrath, his Court being marked by splendid entertainments and luxuriousness. Claudia's brother took his sister's dishonour so to heart that he decided to kill her, and she being warned of his intentions, measures were taken to protect her from his vengeance. On the occasion of a feast and masquerade which the Bishop gave at his castle on the Toblino Lake, the brother disguised himself so cleverly that he was able to lure his victim on to the lake. Accounts vary somewhat as to what exactly happened: one source will have it that brother and sister were both drowned; another, that the plot was discovered in time, and that only the brother was drowned. That he ended in the limpid waters of this mournful mountain-bowered lake there is no doubt, likewise that the fair Claudia's offspring remained illegitimate.

Dante comes rather to the fore in and about Trent; a large statue of him graces the most prominent public square in the town, and local historians have done their best to settle the vexed question whither Dante directed his steps in his exile in a manner favourable to Trent. Positive proof of his stay in its neighbourhood it is impossible to produce, but the probabilities are strongly in favour of his having visited, amongst other places,

the stronghold of the Castelbarcos, and his several references to the Trentino in his *Divina Commedia* makes it all the more likely that they sprang from personal acquaintance with the locality. Curiously enough, as W. D. McCrackan has pointed out, it was an English writer, Henry Clark Barlow, who was the first foreign scholar to draw attention to Dante's sojourn in the Trentino. And certainly it seems highly probable that Dante, when he described the *Inferno*, had before his eye those impressively desolate regions the traveller passes soon after leaving Trent. The bare, thirsty-looking mountains, here absolutely verdureless and lifeless cliffs, there deserts of huge rocks, thrown about in the wildest confusion—such as meet, for instance, his eye at *Pietra Murata* in the Val Sarca—represent a picture of desolation well fit to inspire a poet on the look-out for a *tout ensemble* of the infernal regions.

A newly opened-up region stretches away in an easterly direction from Trent—*i.e.*, the Val Sugana—whither a railway branches off at the last-named town. The earlier history of this frontier valley from the time of the Romans was one of deadly strife, for at least three, and occasionally as many as five, different sovereign lords constantly strove to obtain possession of it. The results were, of course, most disastrous for this unfortunate region, and even now it is the scene of contention between the Teuton and the Italian elements in South Tyrol, where angry politics run high. Pergine, which the Germans persist in calling Perzen,

with a picturesque old castle of the Bishops of Trent; then Levico, with its little lake; and finally Borgo, the capital of the Val Sugana, are all connected by rail with Trent. The line stops at the Italian frontier, so for the present its traffic returns are not what they might be were the Italian Government to continue the line, and relations between the two Governments were less strained.

South of the Val Sugana, but already beyond Tyrol's boundaries, are the much-talked-of *Sette Comuni*, where in the midst of Italians seven villages with names of distinctly Latin origin have remained Teuton in speech and customs. Similar German settlements are to be found in the Nonsberg, near Fondo and elsewhere, but none have attracted so much attention as the *Sette Comuni*.

Returning to the main Adige Valley, we are rapidly approaching the southern boundary of Tyrol, which the train reaches at Ala, where the usual custom-house formalities have to be gone through. But we have still to say a word or two of the three remaining towns—Rovereto, Arco, and Riva. The first named is an industrial centre, without special features of interest; while Arco, which we reach by branching off from the main line at Mori, the station after Rovereto, is a more interesting place on account of its ancient history, as well as because it has become a popular health-resort. It lies in a very sheltered position, and has a dry, sunny climate. Its one drawback is the wind, particularly in spring, accounted for by the neighbourhood of the

Lago di Garda. The *Lacus Benacus*, as the Romans called this lake, is rarely perfectly calm, a truth already recognized by Virgil. The length of the lake (thirty-four miles) and its situation make the northern end a gusty spot in a country so extremely wind-still as is Tyrol, where a mere breeze is called a gale. There is some grand scenery round Riva and Arco, but it has all that parched, desolate look already spoken of. Only the northern part of the lake belongs to Tyrol, and Riva lies snugly ensconced under the precipitous Rocchetta (5,000 feet), in the north-west corner of it, the configuration of the lake at this end presenting a curious chopped-off appearance, caused by the fact that no less than six streams have deposited a great stretch of alluvium. From Riva the Ponale road, by skirting along the lake shore in a southerly direction, and then bending off sharply westwards, reaches the Valle di Ledro, with Pieve de Ledro as principal place. From the Ponale road some very beautiful views northwards towards Arco can be gained; one of these our picture shows. The mountains round the northern end of the lake run up to 7,200 feet, the views from the *Punta Telegrafo* and the *Altissimo* being particularly grand. The Lago di Garda, the lowest of all the Italian lakes, is but 47 metres, or something like 150 feet, above the Adriatic, while at its greatest depth its lowest point is over 1,000 feet below the sea. Of all Tyrolese highroads, the one to the Ponale Falls is the lowest, contrasting strangely in this respect to the Stelvio road, which a bird could reach by a flight of

LAGO DI GARDA AND TORBOLE

fifty miles, where, and when one has reached its apex, one stands over 9,000 feet above the Adriatic.

At one period the lake must have reached a good deal farther up towards Arco, and Mount Brione, which now stands as an isolated hill in the centre of the alluvial land, was once probably an island. Fortifications now crown it, and it is a capital point of view, for it overlooks the whole upper end of the lake.

Over the Lago di Garda sweep in more or less regular intervals two winds—the north wind, or *vento paesano*, and the south wind, or *ora*. The first blows from midnight until noon, the other from about noon until midnight, a pause of one or two hours intervening between each change. The regularity of these changes was already noticed and described by Catullus in the third century of the Christian era. Steamers make the circuit of the lake at regular intervals, the first stopping-place out of Riva being Torbole, at the north-east corner of the lake. With a final glance from the hotel terrace, taking in the beautiful lake with its phalanx of mountains towering over it, the traveller bids good-bye to Tyrol, for the next place the boat stops at, Malcesine, is already on Italian soil. Soon afterwards the mountains become hills, and recede farther and farther from the shores of the lake, until finally, some time before one reaches Peschiera and Desenzano the wide vine-covered plains of Lombardy stretch away before one.

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